

Parents / Guardian / Carers

My Ref:
Your Ref: DSA/da
Date: 5th December 2022

Dear Parent, Guardian and Carers

Re: Group A Streptococcal Infection/ Scarlet Fever

The UK Health Security Agency has recently identified an increase in cases of scarlet fever (caused by Group A streptococcal infection) and invasive Group A Streptococcal infection (pneumonia or other serious infections). We are reaching out to clarify what this means and how best to keep children safe.

These infections and the associated illnesses are not new and most infections are mild. A small number of children will become seriously unwell and require health care. With an increased number of infections, there will likely be an increase in the number of sick children. However, early identification and treatment can help to prevent this.

Signs, symptoms and what to do if your child is unwell.

Scarlet fever can cause a sandpapery rash that appears pink/red on lighter skin but can be more difficult to see on darker skin. Children may also develop a red tongue and cheeks along with a sore throat, headache and high temperature.

If you notice these signs, please stay at home, and contact your GP or 111 who can support you with a diagnosis, antibiotic treatment, and advice to reduce household spread. It is important that any antibiotic course is completed, even if the child feels better.

As a parent, if you feel that your child seems seriously unwell, you should trust your own judgement.

Call 999 or go to A&E if:

- your child is having difficulty breathing – you may notice grunting noises or their tummy sucking under their ribs
- there are pauses when your child breathes
- your child's [skin, tongue or lips are blue](#)
- your child is floppy and will not wake up or stay awake

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 If you need this document in another language or format contact the service using the details above.

How can I prevent infection?

Scarlet fever/ Group A streptococcal infection is spread by inhaling droplets from coughs and sneezes of an infected person. Spread of infection can be prevented by;

- washing your hands often
- not share eating utensils with an infected person
- wash, or dispose of, handkerchiefs and tissues contaminated by an infected person
- keeping children who are ill away from school for at least 24 hours after starting antibiotic treatment

Additional information:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/scarlet-fever-symptoms-diagnosis-treatment>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ukhsa-update-on-scarlet-fever-and-invasive-group-a-strep>

Yours faithfully



Dudu Sher-Arami
Director of Public Health
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Enfield Council has launched a series of 14 e-newsletters covering a range of topics that provide residents with more frequent Council news and service updates. More than 40,000 people have already signed up, make sure you're one of them. You can register at www.enfield.gov.uk/enewsletters