

# Children's Ear Nose & Throat Center

Sub-specialists of Dell Children's Medical Center of Central Texas

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## Tonsillitis

Tonsillitis is an infection in the throat that causes inflammation. These infections are spread by close contact with other individuals. Bacterial infections are more common during the winter, while viral infections are more common in summer and fall.

### Signs and Symptoms of Tonsillitis

The symptoms of tonsillitis depends greatly on the cause of the infection and the person infected. For some children, the onset of symptoms may be quick; for others, symptom onset is slow. The following are the most common symptoms of tonsillitis. However, each child may experience symptoms differently.

- Sore throat
- Fever (either low grade or high)
- Headache
- Decrease in appetite
- Not feeling well
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Stomach aches
- Painful swallowing
- Visual redness or drainage in the throat

### Diagnosis of Tonsillitis

In most cases, it is hard to distinguish between a viral sore throat and a strep throat based on physical examination. It is important, though, to know if the sore throat is caused by strep, as this requires antibiotic treatment to help prevent the complications associated with these bacteria.

### Treatment for Tonsillitis

Specific treatment will be determined by your child's physician based on:

- Your child's age, overall health, and medical history
- Extent and cause of the condition
- Your child's tolerance for specific medications, procedures, or therapies
- Expectations for the course of the condition
- Your opinion or preference

If bacteria do not cause the infection, then the treatment is focused on the comfort of your child. Antibiotics will not help treat viral sore throats. Treatment may include:

- Acetaminophen (for pain)
- Increased fluid intake
- Throat lozenges