

# Sore throat

## in adults and children



The most common cause of a sore throat is a cold. A sore throat usually disappears by itself after a few days. If the sore throat lasts for more than 14 days, it is referred to as a chronic sore throat. In addition to infections, dry (heated) air and dry mucous membranes can also cause pain and scratchiness in the throat.

### What can you do yourself to relieve a sore throat?

#### Treatment without medication:

- Drink enough, but not greatly more than usual.
- Take it easy and get well rested.
- Refrain from smoking and avoid smoky rooms.
- Gargle salt water or herbal tea (sage or camomile tea).  
**Caution:** Children should NOT gargle salt water.
- Throat compresses (e.g. potato or lemon compresses) can soothe a sore throat.
- Vapour inhalation can relieve a sore throat.
- Sucking ice cubes, for example, can help to moisturise the throat and relieve pain.

#### Treatment with medication:

Treatment with medication is not normally necessary. As sore throats are often caused by viruses, taking antibiotics is usually not helpful. A doctor can prescribe antibiotics if a bacterial infection is detected. Taking pain-relieving medication or lozenges can help, but should also always be done in consultation with a doctor.

### When should medical advice be sought?

Contact a doctor in the following cases:

- You have a high temperature.
- Your sore throat will not get better or gets worse after 3-4 days.
- You have chest pain.
- You have difficulty swallowing.
- High-pitched sounds can be heard when breathing.
- Your general condition deteriorates significantly.

### Did your doctor's office just close?

As a rule, it is fine to call on the next working day.

**Are you unsure? Then call 1450, the telephone health counselling service.**

You can find more information and sources at [www.wobinichrichtig.at](http://www.wobinichrichtig.at).



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