

# Recognising symptoms of scarlet fever

It's not uncommon to see a rise in cases of scarlet fever at this time of year. Parents are encouraged to look out for symptoms and go to the GP immediately if they have concerns.

## Symptoms

[Scarlet fever](#) is a common childhood infection caused by bacteria which can be found on the skin, throat and other places.

It was once a very common and dangerous disease, but antibiotic treatment means it is now much less serious.

The symptoms of scarlet fever in early illness may include:

- sore throat
- headache
- fever
- nausea and vomiting

After 12 to 48 hours a red, generalised pinhead rash develops, typically first appearing on the chest and stomach, rapidly spreading to other parts of the body, giving the skin a sandpaper-like texture.

On more darkly-pigmented skin, the scarlet rash may be harder to spot, although the 'sandpaper' feel should be present.

You can find out more about the disease on the page below:

Children or adults diagnosed with scarlet fever are advised to stay at home until at least 24 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment to avoid spreading the infection to others.

## More useful links