

## **SYMPTOMATIC TREATMENT OF SORE THROATS**

There are no sure-fire, ideal symptomatic treatments for sore throats, prescription or otherwise. If the sore throat is caused by a virus, and over 60% of them are, you will just have to wait it out until the virus subsides. The techniques listed below will help as much as anything, regardless of the cause of the sore throat. There is one prescription medicine available, viscous lidocaine, which offers somewhat more powerful local pain relief, but it doesn't last any longer than gargling with salt water, tastes terrible, and can only be taken every three hours or so. Therefore, we only prescribe it for extremely severe sore throats. A comparable degree of relief can be obtained by gargling with non-prescription Benadryl liquid (see below).

### **Ibuprofen or Tylenol**

These oral pain medicines are about the longest lasting treatments for sore throats. Ibuprofen may work slightly better, since it has anti-inflammatory action which Tylenol does not. Adults and children over 12 can take 200 mg ibuprofen, 2 or 3 tablets every 4 to 6 hours, up to 15 over a 24 hour period, for up to several days. For Tylenol, take 2 regular strength (325 mg) every 4 hours, or 2 extra strength (500 mg) every 6 hours. These doses should not be exceeded, and you should not take the maximum dose if you have any liver or kidney problems, or if you are an alcoholic, without checking with us first. Follow directions on the bottle for children.

### **Salt water gargles**

This old-time home remedy really works. Put about a quarter teaspoon of salt in a glass of warm water, and gargle. This may be done as often as desired.

### **Benadryl Liquid**

This has 12.5 mg of Benadryl per teaspoon. It can be used as a gargle, then swallowed, and has both local and systemic actions which help the sore throat. It can, however, cause drowsiness, and so should not be swallowed if mental alertness is important, such as for driving or operating machinery (it can still be used as a gargle, however). Adults can use 2 teaspoons every 4 to 6 hours. It should not be used in children under the age of 2 years. The dose for children should be based on weight, and given every 4 to 6 hours as follows: 20# - ½ tsp.; 40# - 1 tsp.; 60# - 1½ tsp.; 80# - 2 tsp. If not swallowed, then the dosing interval may be shortened to every 2 to 3 hours (gargle and spit out).

### **Chloroseptic Spray**

Use as directed on the bottle.

### **Lozenges**

Any of the cough drops or lozenges on the market will help, but the Chloroseptic Menthol/Benzocaine lozenges, which come in several flavors, are particularly good. They contain a local anesthetic, as well as a soothing agent.

### **Popsicles**

(Or something else cold.) This has a soothing effect on the throat, and supplies some liquid and a few calories.

### **Rest**

As with any illness, the recuperative benefit of adequate rest cannot be overstated.