



One of a series of tip sheets that look at key Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set measures

Appropriate testing for children with pharyngitis

This measure examines the percentage of children 3–18 years of age who were diagnosed with strep throat, pharyngitis or tonsillitis, and whether a strep test was completed before receiving antibiotics.

Improving HEDIS® scores**

- **Order** one of the following to confirm the underlying cause for patients with symptoms of pharyngitis:
 - Rapid strep test: *87880
 - Throat culture: *87070, *87071, *87081, *87430, *87650-*87652

Note: A negative rapid strep test should be verified by culture.

- **Ensure** antibiotics are being used only in cases where they are needed. This helps:
 - Prevent antibiotic resistance
 - Avoid unnecessary side effects
- **Educate** patients on:
 - Symptomatic treatments
 - Preventing the spread of illness through good hygiene and frequent hand washing
 - Importance of completing a full course of antibiotics if needed

Did you know?

- Viruses are responsible for 70 to 80 percent of cases of pharyngitis in children.
- Only about 15 to 30 percent of all cases of pharyngitis in children are due to primary bacterial pathogens, with group A beta hemolytic streptococcus, or GABHS, being the most common.
- More than 80 serotypes (variations within a species of bacteria) of GABHS have been isolated. These are associated with such complications as rheumatic fever, pyoderma and acute post-streptococcal glomerulonephritis.

Tip:

The following resources provide helpful information for sharing with your patients: Choosing Wisely Campaign, an initiative of the ABIM Foundation (choosingwisely.org***) The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Get Smart programs (cdc.gov/getsmart***)

*CPT codes, descriptions and two-digit numeric modifiers only are copyright 2016 American Medical Association. All rights reserved.

**HEDIS, which stands for Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set, is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance.

***Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan does not control this website or endorse its general content.