



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 2-18 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**)

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