

Moxie digest

A Community Pharmacy training guide



VOL 5

This Volume contains:

- * General Overview
- * Self Care tips
- * WWHAM Questions
- * When to refer to the Pharmacist
- * Treatment algorithm
- * Test of Knowledge

Topic Of Focus

Sore Throat

Ideal for training:

Corper Pharmacists | Intern Pharmacists | Pharmacy Technicians | Counter Assistants | Pharmacy Students

HOW TO USE THIS TRAINING MANUAL

This book is broken down into chapters based on different disease conditions. Each chapter is further broken down into different sections to help the reader fully understand the disease condition and empower the reader with the necessary skills and information needed to give the best form of pharmaceutical care to the patient. The sections include

1 Disease overview

This section looks at the general disease condition, symptoms and common medications used in treating the condition. It helps the reader get a deeper understanding of cause of the disease and how the medication works.

2 Self-care tips

This column focuses on additional steps and advice given to the patient to help ensure that recovery is quick. This section usually focuses on non-drug approach to disease management.

3 WWHAM Questions

This section provides a good framework for finding out more about a customer's condition.

Everyone in the pharmacy team should be familiar with the WWHAM questions. Proper use of these questions helps the Pharmacy team to obtain the necessary information so that they can offer the right advice and/or a product recommendation.

The WWHAM questions are intended to form the basis of any conversations with customers, whether you are responding to their health complaints and recommending a product or they have asked for a medicine by name.

The WWHAM Questions are

- W** Who **W: Who is the medicine for?**
It may not be for the customer
- W** What **W: What are the symptoms?**
You may need to ask a few more questions so that you can fully understand the symptoms.
- H** How **H: How long have you had the symptoms?**
Many minor ailments clear up within a few days.
- A** Action **A: What Action has been taken?**
Have they tried any medicine or treatment without success?
- M** Medi-
cation **M: Are you taking any other Medication?**
It is important to ask about prescribed medicines as well as any OTC and herbal remedies as some can interact with each other.

In addition to the WWHAM questions, it is also important to find out whether the patient has any allergies. (it is important to know if the patient reacts to any medicines, foods or other substances).

4 When to refer to the Pharmacist

This section focuses on things the care giver should look out for and then subsequently refer to the Pharmacist in Charge. The section focuses on triggers that point the care giver to the fact that there may be a more serious underlying condition which requires professional management.

5 At a glance

This is a pictorial treatment algorithm for the disease under consideration. It shows a flow chart that the care giver can easily follow in questioning the patient so as to rule out any complications. It also clearly spells out the point at which the case is referred to the Pharmacist in charge.

6 Test of Knowledge Exercise

After each topic, the reader is expected to answer 10 questions drawn from the content studied. The answers to the questions are provided at the back of this manual.

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Paracetamol

Oral Suspension



Sore throat

Sore throats are extremely common, particularly in the cold harmattan seasons in Nigeria between late November and January. The excessively dry weather during this period causes severe dryness of the protective mucous membrane lining of the throat which can expose one to infections of the upper respiratory tract. Here's how you can help customers to ease their pain.



A sore throat refers to pain, itchiness, or irritation of the throat. People with sore throat may have difficulty swallowing food and liquids or even their spit, and they may feel serious pain when they try to swallow. Throat pain is the primary symptom of a sore throat; the soreness typically gets worse over 2-3 days and then usually

gradually goes within a week. However, in about 1 in 10 cases, the soreness lasts longer than a week.

Other symptoms may include a dry throat, swollen glands in the neck and hoarseness (a change in the voice or weak voice). Many people develop a sore throat once or twice each year, although these usually

disappear without the need for any treatment.

A sore throat can affect people of all ages – however, the risk of a sore throat is higher in some people. This includes children, smokers, allergy sufferers, and people with a weakened immune system. Sharing a close space with others also

increases the risk of upper respiratory infections that can present initially as a sore throat. For a singer or a professional speaker, developing a sore throat is the last thing they want as it may lead to the loss of their voice.

What are the causes?

A sore throat could be one of the many symptoms of an underlying condition such as a cold infection (cold symptoms usually begin with a sore throat). However, a sore throat could also stand alone as a condition by direct infection of the throat areas, primarily by

irritation caused by persistent coughing.

There are several causes of a sore throat. They include:

- **Infections** –

Infections by viruses or bacteria account for majority of sore throats, of which most are caused by viruses (about 70-90%). Sore throats often accompany viral infections, including the flu, colds, measles, chicken pox etc.

However, in about 10 per cent of adults and 30 per cent of children, the cause is a bacterium called Streptococcus (children are more likely to have strep throat).

Another possible cause of sore throat is Candida (the fungi that causes thrush), which can occur following treatment with antibiotics or steroids. Sore throat infections, when due to viruses or bacteria, can be easily spread to others through direct contact, such as shaking hands or kissing, or through the air via airborne droplets while coughing or sneezing.

Tonsillitis is an inflammation of the tonsils (tissue found at the back of the mouth), and may be the cause of severe sore throat. It is caused by bacteria and viruses.

Symptoms are similar to a sore throat; in particular, fever and generally feeling unwell tend to be worse.

- **Environmental factors** –

Not all sore throats are viral or bacterial. There are several other causes of throat pain. Some people react to dust, cat and dog hair, pollen, or other irritants and exposure to them can cause excess mucus to



Sore throat can be transmitted through kissing

accumulate in the back of the throat. This accumulation can irritate the throat and cause pain or inflammation. Dry air can also make the throat feel sore and scratchy. Smoking cigarettes or exposure to cigarette smoke can cause persistent sore throats, as well as throat strain from shouting or too much talking.

What are the symptoms?

The symptoms of sore throat vary from localized, mild discomfort to intense pain in swallowing. Other symptoms may include:

- Dry throat
- Difficulty swallowing
- Hoarseness or croakiness of voice
- Redness and swelling of the back of the throat
- Tenderness (feeling of pain when touched) around the jaw and ear or around the front of the throat

Tonsillitis usually causes an extremely painful sore throat, along with a fever, headache and general

feeling of being unwell. It is difficult to tell the cause of a sore throat just from looking at the throat and considering the symptoms. However, careful questioning can help you to decide what course of treatment to recommend. You should refer to the pharmacist if your customer's sore throat is severe or if symptoms have lasted for more than five days.

What are the treatment options?

It is rare for antibiotics to be needed for sore throat. This is usually only necessary when it is the result of serious bacterial infection like tonsillitis. Sore throats tend to get better on their own, in around three to seven days, without using any treatment. However, there are plenty of OTC medicines that can make sufferers' throats more comfortable in the meantime.

• Pastilles and lozenges

Sucking any pastille, lozenge or boiled sweet can help relieve

Self-care tips

- ▲ Drink plenty of fluids. Warm drinks containing lemon juice and honey can be soothing (warm tea with honey is a favorite home remedy)
- ▲ Take time to rest.
- ▲ Maintain good hygiene. Do not share napkins, towels, cups, cutlery etc. with an infected person
- ▲ Use hand sanitizers whenever soap and water are not available.
- ▲ Don't smoke
- ▲ Gargle with soluble aspirin (adults only) or warm, salt water

sore throat. This is because sucking produces saliva, which helps to lubricate the throat. Many pastilles and lozenges contain soothing ingredients to relieve irritation. These include glycerine and honey, which can be taken safely by most people to stop their throat from feeling dry. Customers with diabetes should use throat sweet with caution as many have high sugar content, although there are sugar-free versions



Lemon juice and honey helps to resolve sore throat

available. Other customers may also prefer a sugar-free alternative. **Example: Pectol, Methodex Lozenges, Strepsils Soothing Honey and Lemon Lozenges.**

• **Antiseptic Lozenges**

Many lozenges also contain antiseptic agents for killing germs, such as dequalinium chloride, benzalkonium, cetylpyridinium chloride, hexylresorcinol and/or menthol or camphor. **Example: Beecham Max Strength Sore Throat Relief, Strepsils Original, Dequadin.**

• **Local anaesthetics**

Lozenges and throat sprays may contain local anaesthetics such as benzocaine. If there is difficulty swallowing due to a sore throat, these products can help to reduce pain. They should not be used for more than five days. Not suitable for elderly people or children under 12 years in the case of

lozenges and under six in the case of sprays.

Examples: Merocaine, Ultra Chloraseptic Anaesthetic Throat Spray.

• **Painkillers/anti-inflammatories**

Paracetamol, ibuprofen or aspirin can ease the pain of a sore throat and reduce some of the swelling. It can also ease fever and headaches associated with a sore throat. If your customer's throat is very inflamed (swollen), it can help to gargle with soluble aspirin dissolved in a glass of water for about 3-4 minutes. It is important to spit out the aspirin after gargling and try not to swallow it if taking other medicines. (Aspirin should not be

When to refer to the Pharmacist

- ✦ If the person has a fever
- ✦ If the sore throat has lasted longer than five days
- ✦ If there are spots on the throat or tongue
- ✦ If there is any neck stiffness or severe soreness
- ✦ If the person has difficulty swallowing or breathing
- ✦ If the sore throat worsens quickly
- ✦ If there is a skin rash of any description

taken by children under 16 years).

Example: Disprin, Buprol, Ibupain Forte.

- **Cough syrups**

Even if the customer does not have a cough (yet), Over-The-Counter cough syrups can help ease soreness. Like lozenges, they coat the throat and provide temporary pain relief. If customers are headed to work, be sure to give a non-drowsy formula so that it does not affect them. But if they are having trouble sleeping due to a sore throat, a night-time formula (which contains a pain reliever e.g. codeine and/or a sedating antihistamine) can relieve pain and help them get some sleep.

Examples: Linctifed-F Syrup, Tuxil-D Syrup, Zubes Soothing Cough Mixture, Menthodex Cough Mixture.

- **Salt water**

Gargling (bubbling of liquid in your mouth while the head is tilted backwards) with salt water several times a day can be a good way

to relieve a sore throat. It reduces the painful swelling in the throat and loosens mucus, helping to flush out irritants or bacteria. Customers should add a teaspoon of salt to a glass of warm water and use it to rinse their throats for about 20 seconds, and then spit

it out.

This should be repeated until they have run out of salt water in the cup (they should not swallow the salt water).

If the taste is too salty, they should try to add a small amount of honey to sweeten the mixture slightly.



**PLEASE
NO SMOKING**

Smoking should be discouraged in patients with cough



Patients with cough and cold should be advised to get adequate bed rest

WWHAM questions

Ask these questions in order to find out more about the patient's condition so as to give accurate advice and correct medication for their problems.

W

W – Who is it for?

It may not be the customer who needs the treatment. Remember that many sore throat products have high sugar content and should be avoided by people with diabetes.

W

W – What are the symptoms?

Sore throats caused by viral infections are often accompanied by other symptoms, such as blocked or runny nose and headache.

H

H – How long have the symptoms been present?

This will help establish what may be causing the sore throat.

A

A – Action already taken?

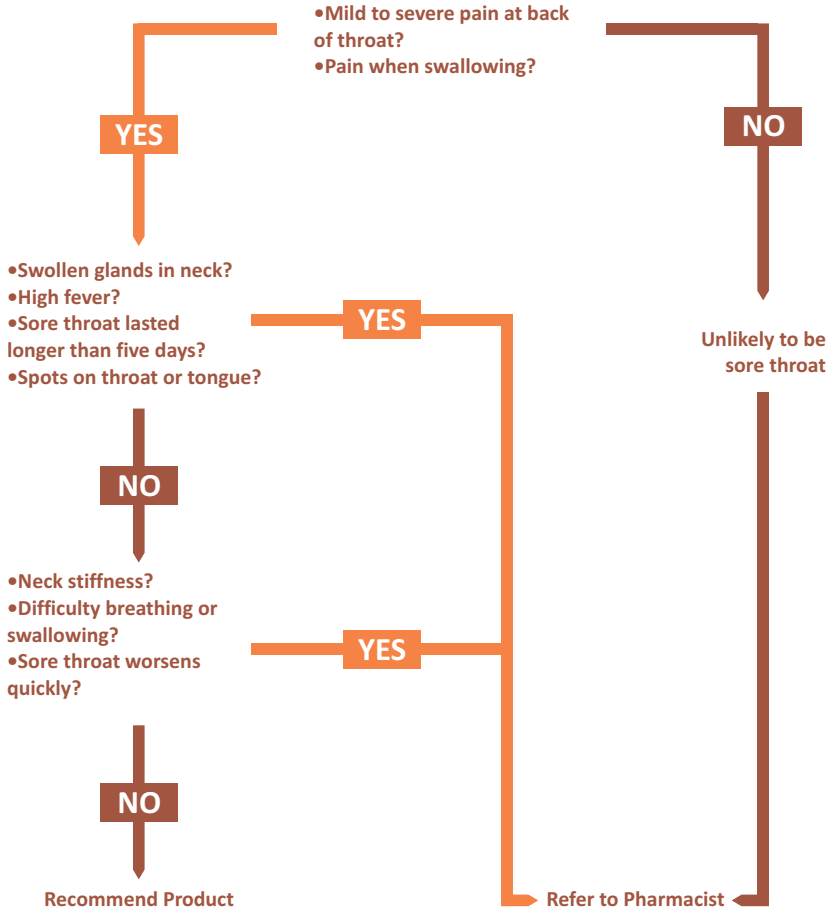
This will help you find out if the customer has tried a product that has not helped.

M

M – Medications?

It is important to refer customers who are taking other medicines. Remember some medicines can lead customers develop oral thrush e.g. antibiotics abuse.

At a glance



Test of Knowledge Exercises

1. Sore throats are extremely common, particularly in the cold harmattan seasons in Nigeria between

- a. Early November and late January
- b. Early November and early January
- c. Late November and January
- d. December and January

2. A sore throat refers to all the following EXCEPT

- a. Clearing of the throat
- b. Pain in the throat
- c. Itchiness of the throat
- d. Irritation of the throat

3. The primary symptom of a sore throat is

- a. Dry throat
- b. Swollen glands in the neck
- c. Hoarseness
- d. Throat pain

4. The risk of a sore throat is higher in all of the following EXCEPT

- a. Children
- b. Smokers
- c. Allergy sufferers
- d. People with a strong immune system

5. Which of the following is NOT true?

- a. Majority of sore throats are due to bacterial or viral infections
- b. Viruses account for 70-90% of sore throats caused by infections
- c. Sore throats often accompany viral infections
- d. All sore throat cases are caused by bacterial or viral infections

6. Which of the following statements are NOT correct?

- a. Tonsillitis usually causes an extremely painful sore throat
- b. The symptoms of sore throat vary from localized, mild discomfort to intense pain in swallowing
- c. Dry air does not cause sore throats
- d. The cause of a sore throat is difficult to tell just from looking at the throat and considering the symptoms

7. Examples of antiseptic lozenges include the following EXCEPT

- a. Dequalinium chloride
- b. Benzalkonium
- c. Cetylpyridinium chloride
- d. Benzocaine

8. The following are examples of cough syrups that are useful in sore throats EXCEPT

- a. Linctifed-F Syrup
- b. Tuxil-D Syrup
- c. Buprol
- d. Methodex Cough Mixture

9. Which of the following is NOT true?

- a. Painkillers and anti-inflammatories can ease the pain of a sore throat and reduce some of the swelling
- b. Painkillers and anti-inflammatories can also ease fever and headaches associated with a sore throat
- c. Aspirin can be taken by children under 16 years
- d. Example of painkillers and anti-inflammatories include Disprin, Buprol, Ibupain Forte

10. Bubbling of liquid in the mouth while the head is tilted backwards is known as

- a. Fumbling
- b. Bubbling
- c. Gambling
- d. Gargling

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