Memorandum

To: Family Physicians, General Internists, Gerontologists, Obstetricians/Gynecologists (Women’s Health), Pediatricians, Adult Primary Care Nurse Clinicians

From: Grant Greenberg MD, MA, MHSA, Guidelines Clinical Lead
Van Harrison, PhD, Guidelines Process Lead

Subject: UMHS Clinical Care Guideline Update: Pharyngitis

What's New.

- Amoxicillin dosing is now 50 mg/kg (1 gram maximum) once daily.
- If allergic to penicillin, a 10-day course of a first generation cephalosporin is indicated if no history of an immediate or type I hypersensitivity to penicillin. Oral clindamycin is an acceptable alternative if one is unable to use a first generation cephalosporin.
- The Guideline now lists the national performance measure that will compare institutional rates for prescribing antibiotics for pharyngitis without first screening for GAS.
  - Denominator: the number of children 2–18 years old with a diagnosis of pharyngitis who had an ambulatory or pediatric encounter and who were prescribed an antibiotic to treat pharyngitis less than three days after the encounter
  - Numerator: the number of these children who had a strep test (screen or culture) less than four days before or after being prescribed the antibiotic

Key aspects.

- Reduce the indiscriminate use of antibiotics for those who will not benefit – most sore throats are viral.
- Test for strep only in patients with suggestive signs and symptoms (e.g., severe sore throat, fever, tender anterior cervical lymphadenopathy, red pharynx with tonsillar swelling, no cough).
- If a rapid strep screen is negative:
  - In patients ≥ 16 years of age, NOT sending a confirming throat culture is acceptable.
  - In patients < 16 years of age, a confirming throat culture should be sent.
- Recommended medications and their costs have been updated.
  - Amoxicillin as a single daily dose for 10 days is as effective as penicillin V or amoxicillin given multiple times per day for 10 days.
  - A table lists options for treating patients with symptomatic, recurrent GABHS pharyngitis.

Laboratory information.

- Charges: rapid strep screen = $57; strep culture = $52.
- When it is appropriate to confirm a negative screen in MI-Chart:
  - Under Meds and Orders, order a “strep culture”, indicating the source of the culture.
  - Associate a diagnosis, and click “sign”
  - The medical assistant will then print the requisition, label the specimen, and send to pathology

Patient education material.

Patient education sheets are available by internet:

- “Sore Throat (Pharyngitis)”: http://www.med.umich.edu/1info/fhp/practiceguides/pharyngitis/Pharyngitis.pdf