The Practical Journal for Emergency Physicians Emergency Medicine

"Killer" Sore Throat

Conditions Presenting with Sore Throat and Inability to Swallow Saliva

- Epiglottitis
- · Peritonsillar abscess
- Retropharyngeal abscess
- Ludwig's angina
- · Abscesses in the deep neck space
- Allergic drug reactions
- · Lingual tonsillitis
- · Ingested foreign body with or without perforation

- Pharyngeal zoster
- Botulism
- Tetanus
- · Stevens-Johnson syndrome
- Toxic epidermal necrolvsis Inhalation or aspiration of
- toxic chemicals · Tumors or trauma to the
- larynx
- Diptheria

Clinical Findings of Peritonsillar Abscess

- · Severe pain
- Fever
- Dysphagia •
- Trismus
- · Hoarse, "hot potato" voice
- · Enlargement of the tonsil
- · Uvula deviated to the unaffected side
- Deviation of tonsil toward midline with rotation of anterior tonsillar pillar
- · Fluctuance of the soft tissue between the upper pole of the tonsil and the soft palate

Predisposing Factors for Retropharyngeal Abscess

- · Penetrating trauma: Foreign body such as pencil. Popsicle stick, or fishbone Tonsillitis
- · Otitis media
- Nasal infections
- Dental infections
- Intubation
 - Adenoidectomy (recent)

Complications of Retropharyngeal Abscess

- · Rupture of abscess
- · Airway rupture
- Asphyxiation
- Aspiration pneumonia
- · Spinal rupture
- Lateral pharyngeal space rupture
- · Inferior rupture into mediastinum
- · Airway compromise

Peritonsillar abscess

Pharyngitis

Croup

Scoring System* for Croup⁷⁵

LEVEL OF CONSCIOUSNES	SS	
Normal or sleeping	0	
Disoriented	5	
CYANOSIS		
None	0	
With agitation	4	
At rest	5	
STRIDOR		
None	0	
With agitation	1	
At rest	2	
AIR ENTRY		
Normal	0	
Decreased	1	
Markedly decreased	2	
RETRACTIONS		
None	0	
Mild	1	
Moderate	2	
Severe	3	
	-	

* Zero represents the normal state or absence of the sign and the highest number represents the most severe distress.

Clinical Findings of Epiglottitis in the Adult^{99,100,107,111}

- Gradual onset of symptoms
- Rapid progression
- Severe sore throat (95-100%)
- Dysphagia (76%)
- Pain on swallowing (95%)
- Pain on palpation of the larynx
- High fever (88%)

- Muffled voice (50%)
- Shortness of breath or respiratory difficulty
- Drooling (relatively uncommon)
- "Upright" positioning
- Ear pain
- Toxic appearance

Clinical Findings of Epiglottitis in the Child^{111,112}

- Sudden onset of symptoms
- Rapid progression High fever
- Muffled, "hot potato" voice
- Inspiratory stridor
- · Sore throat
- Dysphagia
- Drooling
- "Tripod" positioning
- Toxic appearance

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