

## **Strep A: Nurses And Physician Jointly Liable For Pediatric Patient's Toxic Shock.**

The six-year-old had been ill for several days. He was acting sleepy and had a headache, sore throat and stomach pains.

His mother called the hospital's pediatric advice line. The nurse told her he probably had a virus and should drink plenty of fluids.

The next morning the mother called back. The advice-line nurse had a pediatrician return the call. The mother told her her son had diarrhea, red eyes, a fever of 103° or 104°, white spots on his tongue and stomach pains and was sleepy, vomiting and not urinating. The pediatrician said to phone for an appointment that morning at the pediatric clinic. The clinic nurse heard the same signs and symptoms over the phone and set an appointment for the child.

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***Minutes can make a significant difference in cases of sepsis.***

***If the mother had been told to take the child to the nearest E.R. most of the complications would have been prevented.***

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
COURT OF APPEALS  
July 2, 2009

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The child collapsed before they got in the car. An ambulance rushed him to the Children's Hospital where he was treated for invasive Group A Strep and toxic shock. Both legs had to be amputated following multiple-organ-system failure.

The District of Columbia Court of Appeals wrestled with how to apportion the jury's \$3,050,000 verdict between the hospital which employed the advice-line and pediatric-clinic nurses and the pediatrician. ***Schoonover v. Chavous*, \_\_ A. 2d \_\_, 2009 WL 1883703 (D.C., July 2, 2009).**