Sore Throat vs. Strep Throat

I feel...

A)

- Congestion
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Fever

B)

- No typical cold symptoms (runny nose or congestion)
- Red, swollen and pus-covered tonsils
- Fever
- Tender and enlarged lymph nodes

I think I have...

If most of your signs and symptoms are in Column A:

- Probably experiencing a common cold (a viral infection)
- Should feel better in 7-10 days
- Antibiotics won’t work to treat a common cold, but decongestants, throat lozenges, over-the-counter pain medicine and plenty of fluids may help alleviate some of the discomfort

If most of your signs and symptoms are in Column B:

- May have strep (a bacterial infection)
- Typical cold symptoms are absent (no runny nose, cough or congestion)
- You should be seen by a healthcare provider who can determine if antibiotics are necessary in treating your sore throat.

Other Information

- A sore throat may be also be a results of cigarette smoking, allergies, hay fever or drainage from sinuses
- A common cold will end on its own in about 7-10 days. Antibiotics will not cure a common cold
- Strep throat is significantly less common than a sore throat or a cold. Antibiotics treat strep throat