

What is acute rheumatic fever?

Acute rheumatic fever is an illness that can be caused by an untreated sore throat or skin sores. A **bad germ** called Strep A gets into the throat and skin and can make you feel sick.

When your immune system is fighting the bad germs, it can sometimes get confused and accidentally hurt other parts of your body like the heart, joints, skin and brain. This is called acute rheumatic fever.



Signs of acute rheumatic fever



How to prevent acute rheumatic fever



Shower daily to keep skin clean



Wash hands a lot



Wash clothes, bedding and towels often to keep the germs away



Hang washing out in the sun

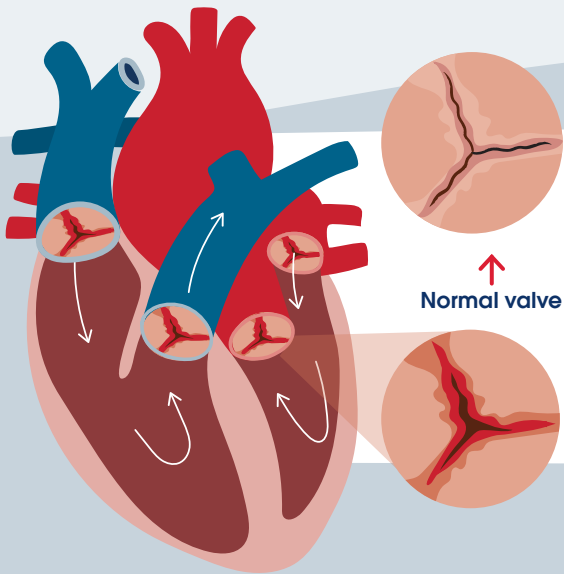


Go to the clinic if you have a sore throat or skin sores



Cover skin sores to stop the spread of germs

What is rheumatic heart disease?



Rheumatic heart disease is damage to the heart valves after acute rheumatic fever.

There are four valves in the heart which open and close to keep the blood pumping in one direction. If the valves are damaged, the blood does not flow properly. This can make your heart sick.

Who is at risk?



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are more at risk of getting acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease.

Young ones aged 5-14 are more likely to get acute rheumatic fever. Adults can get this too.

How to treat rheumatic heart disease



Take needle on time. Every 21 to 28 days to protect your body from letting the cheeky Strep A germ back in.



Check-ups with the doctor and dentist, and special care for pregnant mothers.



You might need surgery to fix the valves in your heart. This might mean flying a long way from home and staying in hospital for a while for the doctors to fix the problems in your heart.

Remember to cover skin sores, wash hands, and go to the clinic if you have a sore throat or skin sores. Acute rheumatic fever needs to be treated early to keep your heart healthy and prevent rheumatic heart disease.

We need to look out for our young mob, and keep their hearts strong.

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