

Acute rheumatic fever

[Fact sheet](http://conditions.health.qld.gov.au/HealthConditions/2/Infections-Parasites/6/Bacterial-Infections/6/Acute-Rheumatic-Fever) (<http://conditions.health.qld.gov.au/HealthConditions/2/Infections-Parasites/6/Bacterial-Infections/6/Acute-Rheumatic-Fever>) - Health conditions directory.

Acute rheumatic fever is a disease that can occur following an infection caused by the Group A streptococcus bacterium. If untreated, a 'strep throat' infection can lead to inflammation in other parts of the body, particularly the joints, brain and heart. Without regular antibiotic treatment, further attacks of rheumatic fever can lead to serious damage of the heart valves. This is known as rheumatic heart disease.

Acute rheumatic fever is a disease of poverty. Overcrowding in the home increases the chances of getting a strep infection, which in turn increases the chances of getting acute rheumatic fever. Indigenous children in central and northern Australia aged between five and 14 years are at a very high risk of developing acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease.

Public health management guidelines

- Read [Communicable Diseases Network Australia Guidelines](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/cdna-song-arf-rhd.htm) (<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/cdna-song-arf-rhd.htm>)

Notification

Attending medical practitioners/medical superintendents (or delegates)

- [Notification criteria](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/F21926F65547FBC8CA2582DC001E1783/$File/ARF-RHD-SoNG-Aug2018.pdf#page=16) ([http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/F21926F65547FBC8CA2582DC001E1783/\\$File/ARF-RHD-SoNG-Aug2018.pdf#page=16](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/F21926F65547FBC8CA2582DC001E1783/$File/ARF-RHD-SoNG-Aug2018.pdf#page=16))
- [Notification procedure](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/notifiable-conditions/list) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/notifiable-conditions/list>)
 - Download the [Notification form for clinicians](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/cdcg/documents/nr-arf.pdf) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/cdcg/documents/nr-arf.pdf>) (PDF, 379kB) to report all confirmed and suspected cases to Public Health Units.

Notification resources

- List of all [Pathological, clinical and provisional diagnosis notifiable conditions](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/notifiable-conditions/list/default.asp) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/notifiable-conditions/list/default.asp>)
- List of [Public Health Unit](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/system-governance/contact-us/contact/public-health-units/default.asp) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/system-governance/contact-us/contact/public-health-units/default.asp>) contacts
- [Notifiable conditions report form for Queensland clinicians \(PHA S70\)](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/publications/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/notif-conditions-rpt.pdf) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/publications/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/notif-conditions-rpt.pdf>) (PDF, 48kB) - if faxing notification, follow up by phone.

Clinical guidelines

- [RHD Australia guideline](http://www.rhdaustralia.org.au/arf-rhd-guideline) (<http://www.rhdaustralia.org.au/arf-rhd-guideline>) (PDF, 3.2MB) – guideline for prevention, diagnosis and management of acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease (2nd Edition).

Resources for health professionals

- [RHD Australia website](http://www.rhdaustralia.org.au/) (<http://www.rhdaustralia.org.au/>) – information and resources for families, community and health care workers; including professional development and rheumatic heart disease programs.