

Rheumatic heart disease

[Fact sheet](http://conditions.health.qld.gov.au/HealthCondition/condition/14/33/824/rheumatic-heart-disease) [http://conditions.health.qld.gov.au/HealthCondition/condition/14/33/824/rheumatic-heart-disease] - Health conditions directory

Rheumatic heart disease is a chronic condition caused by damage to the heart valves, which occurs after single or repeated episodes of acute rheumatic fever. Acute rheumatic fever is an autoimmune disease which occurs following infection with Group A Streptococcus (GAS). Repeated episodes of acute rheumatic fever can lead to accumulative damage to the heart valves. Untreated RHD can lead to heart failure, stroke, arrhythmia, endocarditis and complications in pregnancy.

RHD is a disease of poverty, associated with overcrowding and poor living conditions, as well as lack of access to health care and services. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are at a much higher risk of developing acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease compared to non-Indigenous Australian's. Group A Streptococcal infection, acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease are preventable with improved housing and living conditions, and early antibiotic treatment.

Public health management guidelines

- Read [Communicable Diseases Network Australia Guidelines](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/F21926F65547FBC8CA2582DC001E1783/$File/ARF-RHD-SoNG-Aug2018.pdf) [http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/F21926F65547FBC8CA2582DC001E1783/\$File/ARF-RHD-SoNG-Aug2018.pdf]

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]
- [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/__data/assets/pdf_file/0026/722348/rheumatic-heart-disease-crf.pdf) [https://www.health.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0026/722348/rheumatic-heart-disease-crf.pdf] to report all confirmed and suspected cases to the Rheumatic Heart Disease Register and Control Program.

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) [https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/notifiable-conditions/list]

Clinical guidelines

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

Resources for health professionals

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

[Rheumatic Heart Disease Action Plan 2018 - 2021](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0026/713609/RHD-Action-Plan-2018-2021.pdf)

[https://www.health.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0026/713609/RHD-Action-Plan-2018-2021.pdf] (PDF, 1.4MB)