

## HOW IS IT DIAGNOSED?

Your doctor might:

- Ask you about your symptoms
- Check your body for signs of these conditions
- Take a throat swab
- Do some blood tests
- Take a chest x-ray
- Do tests to check how your heart is working (such as an echocardiogram or ECG)

## HOW IS IT TREATED?

People who have acute rheumatic fever or rheumatic heart disease need antibiotic injections every 4 weeks to prevent new attacks.

You should also:

- Have regular check-ups with your doctor
- Have regular check-ups with your heart specialist
- Have regular check-ups with your dentist
- Get a vaccination for pneumococcal disease and yearly vaccinations for the flu

People with severe rheumatic heart disease may require surgery.

## MORE INFORMATION

More information about RHD is available in the “Things you need to know” booklet available at: [www.rhdaustralia.org.au](http://www.rhdaustralia.org.au)

You can also talk with your doctor, nurse, Aboriginal health worker, or call your local public health unit on **1300 066 055**



# Acute Rheumatic Fever & Rheumatic Heart Disease

Information for patients and the community



## ACUTE RHEUMATIC FEVER

Acute rheumatic fever is an illness that can happen after an infection with a germ called group A Streptococcus.

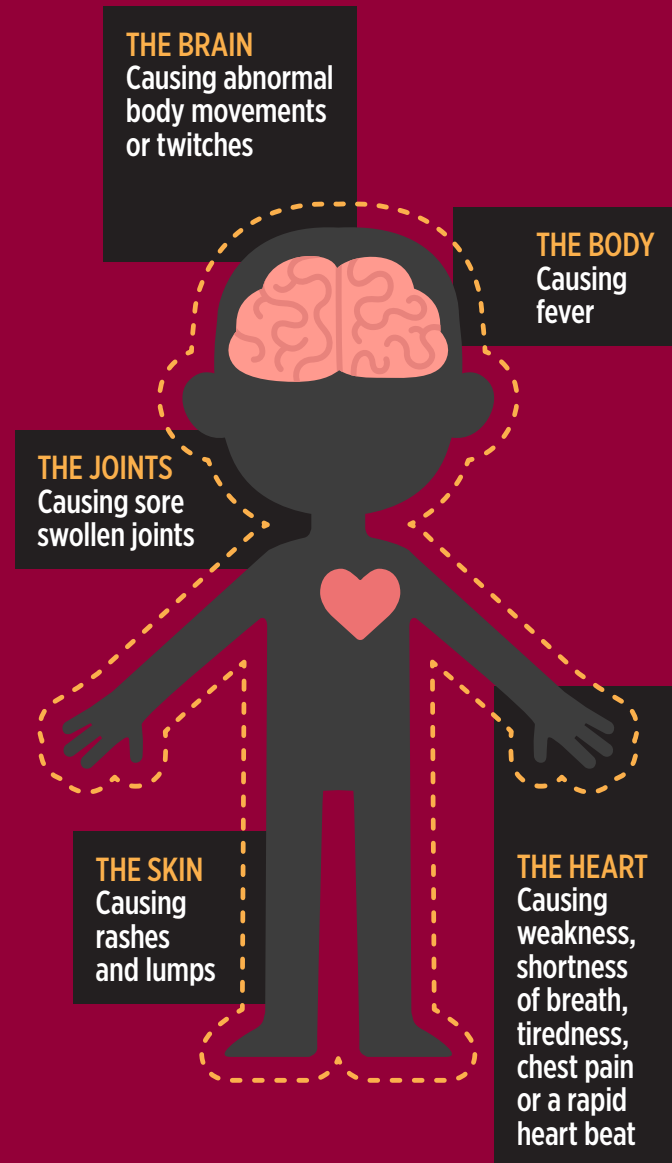


Group A streptococcus causes sore throats and skin sores

Acute rheumatic fever is more likely to affect:

- Children aged 5-14
- Someone who has had acute rheumatic fever before
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Maori and Pacific Islander people

## ACUTE RHEUMATIC FEVER CAN AFFECT...



## HOW IS IT PREVENTED?

Visit your doctor or clinic:

- If you have a sore throat, or
- If you have one or more symptoms of acute rheumatic fever

## RHEUMATIC HEART DISEASE

Acute rheumatic fever can cause damage to the heart valves. This is called rheumatic heart disease or RHD.

This damage to the heart valves makes it hard for your heart to work properly.

Having acute rheumatic fever more than once can make your heart damage worse.

