



LIBERTY

BLUE HEALTH COVER

What you need to know about Rheumatic Fever

LIFE INVESTMENTS HEALTH CORPORATE PROPERTIES ADVICE

What is Rheumatic Fever?

Acute rheumatic fever is a complication of streptococcal pharyngitis (strep throat), a type of bacterial infection of the throat.



Description of Rheumatic Fever

Fortunately, not all streptococcal throat infections are followed by rheumatic fever. Signs of rheumatic fever usually follow an episode of acute sore throat. It most frequently occurs in children between 5 and 15 years of age, but is rare before age 4 or after age 40.



Treatment of Rheumatic Fever

Treatment consists of antibiotics, preferably penicillin, bed rest, aspirin or steroids. Aspirin may reduce fever, relieve joint pain and swelling.

Fortunately, recurrent streptococcal infections can be prevented very effectively with the use of penicillin (Erythromycin may be substituted).

To prevent recurrent episodes of rheumatic fever, ongoing treatment with either oral or injectable penicillin is effective. In the case of children this may need to continue until adulthood.



Prevention of Rheumatic Fever

The initial episode of rheumatic fever can be prevented by early treatment of streptococcal pharyngitis (sore throat) with antibiotics. It is therefore important to see a doctor as soon as a sore throat persists for more than three days or if any of the above symptoms present (joint pain, high fever and skin rash).

Should you need any assistance or more information please do not hesitate to contact your local office or email us at info@libertyhealthblue.com



Symptoms of Rheumatic Fever

- Sore throat
- High Fever
- Many patients experience joint pain (acute arthritis)
- Some patients develop a skin rash which eventually resolves

A serious complication of Rheumatic fever to be aware of is a possible inflammation of the heart muscle. This affects about half the patients diagnosed with Rheumatic Fever and has been reported in one to two-thirds of children hospitalised during recent outbreaks. If untreated this inflammation can lead to heart failure in some patients.



Diagnosis of Rheumatic Fever

Diagnosis is based on the medical history and physical examination. Blood tests are also done.