

Group A Streptococcal Infection

Q. What is Group A Streptococcal?

Group A streptococci (GAS) are a type of bacteria that are spread by close contact between people.

Q. What infections can GAS cause?

GAS can cause Scarlet fever and sore throats, more rarely it can cause more serious disease.

Q. What is Scarlet fever

Scarlet fever is it is highly infectious and usually is mild. Symptoms:

- Sore throat
- Headache
- Fever
- A fine, pinkish or red body rash with a sandpapery feel. (On darker skin the rash can be more difficult to see but will have a sandpapery feel.)

Q. How is scarlet fever treated?

Scarlet fever is treated with antibiotics. Contact NHS 111 or your GP if you suspect your child has scarlet fever.

Q. Can my child go to school?

If your child has scarlet fever, keep them at home until at least 24 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment to avoid spreading the infection to others.

Q. What is Invasive Group A Streptococcal Infection?

Very rarely, GAS can also cause more serious or 'invasive' infection (iGAS) including:

- An infection of the bloodstream
- Skin infection
- Toxic shock syndrome.

As a parent, if you feel that your child seems seriously unwell, you should trust your own judgement. Contact NHS 111 or your GP if:

- your child is getting worse
- your child is feeding or eating much less than normal
- your child has had a dry nappy for 12 hours or more or shows other signs of dehydration
- your baby is under 3 months and has a temperature of 38°C, or is older than 3 months and has a temperature of 39°C or higher
- your baby feels hotter than usual when you touch their back or chest, or feels sweaty
- your child is very tired or irritable

Call 999 or go to A&E if:

- Your child is having difficulty breathing – you may notice grunting noises or their tummy sucking under their ribs
- There are pauses when your child breathes
- Your child's skin, tongue or lips are blue
- Your child is floppy and will not wake up or stay awake

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<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/scarlet-fever/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/scarlet-fever-managing-outbreaks-in-schools-and-nurseries>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ukhsa-update-on-scarlet-fever-and-invasive-group-a-strep>