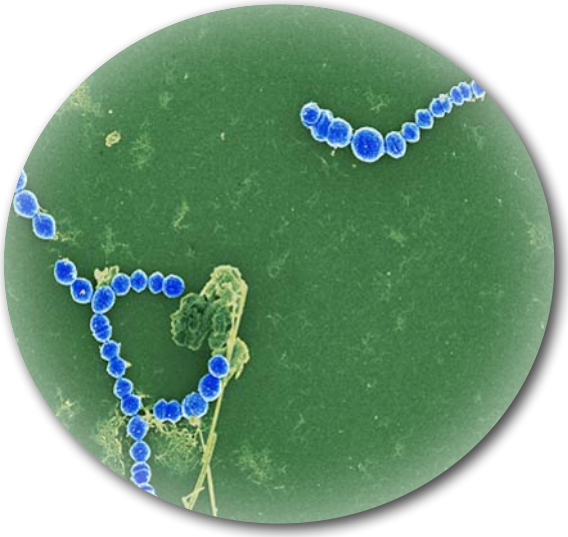
The Leeds Teaching Hospitals
NHS Trust

Infection Control
Group A Streptococcus

Information for patients



Group A Streptococcus is a bacteria or germ. Bacteria or germs are found on everyone, both inside and outside the body.

What is Group A Streptococcus?

Group A Streptococcus like many germs can live harmlessly inside your throat, nose and mouth and on your skin without ever causing an infection. However if it gets in the wrong place at the wrong time, it can cause an infection.

How will I know if I've got Group A Streptococcus?

If staff think you have an infection, they will take a specimen and send it to the laboratory. Either a doctor or a nurse will let you know your results as soon as possible.

How did I get Group A Streptococcus?

Group A Streptococcus may have been in your nose, mouth, throat or on your skin before you came into hospital where it lived happily doing you no harm, or you may have picked it up since you came into hospital. When you are ill your body defences are normally weakened. Operations and other treatments may make you more prone to getting an infection.

What about treatment?

Treatment is not always needed, but if your doctor feels that it is making you unwell, you will be given antibiotics which work against Group A Streptococcus.

What will happen to me?

You may be asked to move into a side room (source isolation) to reduce the chance of spreading infection to other patients. If other patients are affected, you may be nursed together in the same area of the ward.

Staff will be wearing gloves and aprons when caring for you.

Will it affect my visitors?

Group A Streptococcus is not a risk to healthy people.

Visitors will be asked not to move around the ward from patient to patient. If they are visiting someone else apart from you, it is better if they see you last. Visitors will also be asked to clean their hands carefully before leaving your room, or if you are nursed with other patients, before leaving the ward by either using soap and water or the alcohol hand rub (sanitiser) provided.

How can I help stop the spread of Group A Streptococcus?

It is very important that you clean your hands carefully with soap and water or use the alcohol hand rub provided, particularly after using the toilet and before eating. If you have difficulty in getting to the sink then you can use hand wipes to clean your hands. Please ask a member of staff if you need help.

Try not to touch wounds, drips, catheters and other tubes. Having separate cloths or single use wipes for different parts of your body will also help when washing. If you have a bath or a shower these should be cleaned out properly after use. Please inform a member of staff as soon as you have finished.

Can I still go home if I have Group A Streptococcus?

As soon as your doctor thinks you are well enough, you can go home. Having Group A Streptococcus should not stop this. Group A Streptococcus should not affect any part of your day to day life, or any activities you are involved in.

If you, your family or friends have any questions, please feel free to discuss this with the ward staff or an Infection Prevention and Control Practitioner.

Infection Prevention and Control Team
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What did you think of your care?
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