



وزارة الصحة العامة
Ministry of Public Health
دولة قطر • State of Qatar



المبادئ الإرشادية السريرية لدولة قطر
NATIONAL CLINICAL GUIDELINES FOR QATAR

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS & CAREGIVERS

What do you need to know about Group A Streptococcal (GAS) disease in Children?

©Ministry of Public Health of the State Qatar 2020. All copyrights reserved. This covers both electronic and print media as well as derivative works in all languages and in all media of expression now known or later developed.

The content of the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) National Clinical Guidelines (NCGs) and their derivative products are made available for personal and educational use only. The MOPH does not authorize commercial use of this content, as such the content shall in no way be used for the promotion of any third-party commercial company, its products or services.

Full or part of the NCGs, Pathways or relevant Patient Information Leaflets shall not be translated or reproduced in any form without written permission from the MOPH. To obtain such permission please email: ClinicalGuidelines@moph.gov.qa.

To benefit from the latest updates and additional sources of information, the MOPH recommends using the online link to the relevant NCG document.

The MOPH agrees that any distribution of the NCGs, Pathways and relevant Patient Information Leaflets, will include the above copyright notice and appropriate citation.

Valid From: September 21st, 2023.

Date of Next Revision: September 21st 2028

WHAT IS GROUP A STREPTOCOCCAL DISEASE (GAS)?

GAS disease is a group of diseases caused by a bacterium (germ) named Group A Streptococcus (GAS). This germ is often found in the nose, throat, or skin without causing harm or disease.

Sometimes the germ can enter into other parts of the body where it is not usually found, such as the blood, muscles, or the lungs, this can cause disease.

GAS disease usually ranges from mild to moderate or may lead to severe disease.

SYMPTOMS OF GAS DISEASE

The signs and symptoms depend on the type, severity of the disease and age of the child. GAS disease causes one or more of the following signs and symptoms :

- Severe throat pain
- Trouble or pain when swallowing
- Red swollen tonsils
- White spots on the tonsils
- Bad breath
- Strawberry-like tongue, redness on the roof of the child's mouth, or white patches in the back of the throat
- Vomiting
- Enlarged glands in the neck.
- High temperature (38 degrees Celsius or higher)
- Feeling of coldness
- Body pain
- Skin rash
- Headache
- Flushed red face and colourless skin around the mouth
- A sandpaper-like rash in the groin spreads to the upper and lower body
- The child feels or looks very sick or weak
- The child/baby refuses to eat/feed

WHEN SHOULD I GET MEDICAL HELP FOR MY CHILD?

If you suspect that your child has GAS, he/she should be seen by healthcare provider.

WHEN SHOULD YOUR CHILD BE SEEN BY A DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY?

You should seek medical care **immediately** in any of the following situations:

- If your child's skin, lips, or tongue becomes whitish or blue.
- If your child appears ill.
- If your child does not wake up or stay awake.
- Has weak, high-pitched cry, or cries continuously.
- Has difficulty in breathing.

WHAT ARE THE TREATMENTS FOR GAS DISEASE?

GAS treatment depends on the severity of disease.

It includes:

- Antibiotics (either by mouth or injections) mainly penicillin.
- Inform the healthcare provider if your child has allergy to penicillin, or any other drugs or foods.
- If your child has allergy to penicillin the physician will provide an alternative antibiotic.
- The duration of antibiotic treatment depends on the type of GAS disease.
- It is important for your child to finish the antibiotics even if he/she feels better (if treatment stops too soon, some bacteria may survive and re-infect your child).
- You should contact the healthcare provider if you have any concerns or issues related to the medication, or if your child has not improved after completing the antibiotic treatment.
- In addition to antibiotics, the doctor may prescribe medications to relief pain and high temperature.
- Creams or solutions may be offered if your child has skin problems.

It is important to make sure that your child gets enough fluids and avoid smoking near your child.

WHAT YOUR DOCTOR WILL DO?

- First, the doctor will ask you some questions about your child's symptoms. (Feel free to talk to the doctor about any concerns related to your child's condition).
- Then the doctor will look at your child's throat, neck and other body parts, checking for redness or white spots on the throat and enlarged nodes.
- The doctor will probably take samples from your child's throat or blood test (or both) to ensure that your child does not have GAS disease.
- Depending on your child's condition, the doctor/healthcare team may administer antibiotics immediately.
- Your child might be admitted to the hospital for further management.
- If admitted to the hospital, your child will be placed in separate room with certain precaution and visitors will not be allowed for their own safety.

HOW GAS DISEASE SPREADS FROM ONE PERSON TO ANOTHER?

- Germs that cause GAS are highly transmittable.
- It spreads between people through sneezing, kissing and skin contact (contact with a wound).
- People who are already sick with GAS are most likely to spread the infection.
- It can also be spread by contact with contaminated objects and food contaminated by a carrier.

IS IT POSSIBLE TO CONSULT THE DOCTOR VIRTUALLY?

Virtual consultation is not recommended, the child must be seen by a doctor face-to-face.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF MY CHILD IS NOT TREATED FOR GAS DISEASE?

If your child is not properly treated, serious complication may occur (untreated complication may lead to death).



WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO PROTECT MY CHILD FROM GAS DISEASE?

Practicing good hygiene is the best way to protect your child from GAS disease.

- Practice good hygiene and teach your child to wash his/her hands often with soap and water.
- Encourage your child to cover his/her mouth and nose with a tissue when he/she coughs and sneezes, and to wash hands after sneezing.
- Teach your child to use his/ her elbow to cover his/her nose when he/she sneezes or coughs.
- Teach your child not to share personal items such as towels, toys, food with other children.
- Cleaning of the environment, including toys and equipment should be a minimum carried out daily.
- Spitting should be strongly discouraged.



WHEN CAN MY CHILD RETURN TO SCHOOL OR NURSERY?

The child can return to school or nursery 24 hours after he/she has started taking the 1st dose of antibiotics.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Ministry of Public Health has published a National Clinical Guideline advising doctors on how to treat patients with GAS disease.

The Guideline is available to the public from the MOPH website:

www.moph.gov.qa