

To the staff, students and caregivers of Paremata School

RHEUMATIC FEVER

There has been a case of rheumatic fever in your school.

What is Rheumatic Fever?

Rheumatic fever can cause sore or swollen joints (knees, elbows, ankles and wrists), skin rashes, fever, stomach pain or jerky movements. The main problem with rheumatic fever is that it can cause lifelong damage to the heart.

Preventing Rheumatic Fever

Rheumatic fever is an illness that some people develop a few weeks after a sore throat caused by a bacteria, (commonly known as a 'strep' throat infection). Not everyone who gets a 'strep' throat infection will go on to develop rheumatic fever.

'Strep' throat infections can be spread from person to person. To stop spread of 'strep' throats in schools or at home, encourage hand washing, cover mouths when coughing, use tissues when sneezing and throw away tissues as soon as they have been used.

It is also important to find and treat 'strep' throat infections early with antibiotics. Your family doctor can find out whether a sore throat is a 'strep' throat or not by taking a throat swab. If a 'strep' throat is found in time then antibiotics can be given. **It is therefore important that anyone with a sore throat see their family doctor to be checked out and see whether a swab and/or antibiotics should be given.**

If you do visit your family doctor please explain that there has been a recent case of Rheumatic Fever in the school.

If you want to get more information, please contact your family doctor or contact:

Tracey Green
Public Health Nurse
570 9339 or 027 807 5457