

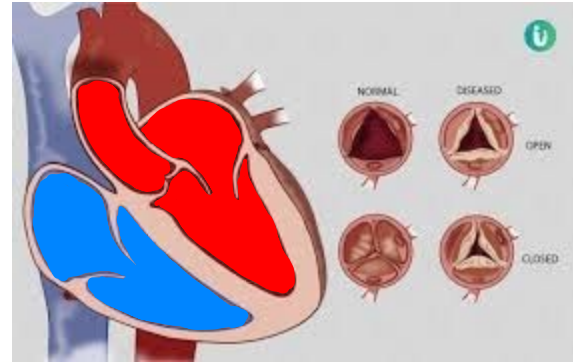
What is Rheumatic HD(Heart Disease)?

-**Rheumatic heart disease** is a condition in which permanent damage to **heart** valves is caused by **rheumatic** fever(Rheumatic fever is an inflammatory disease that can be triggered by a streptococcal bacterial infection.) **Rheumatism** refers to various painful medical conditions which affect joints, bones, cartilage, tendons, ligaments and muscles. (www.chw.org)



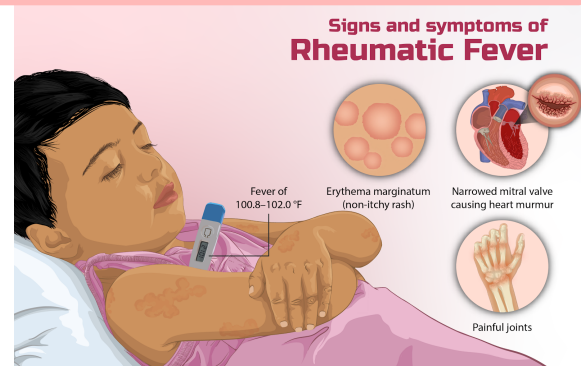
What body part(s) or organ(s) does it affect? And how?

The most common form of rheumatic heart disease affects the heart valves. It may take several years after an episode of rheumatic fever for valve damage to develop or symptoms to appear. Although **rheumatic** fever **can affect** any **heart** valve, it most commonly **affects** the mitral valve which lies between the two chambers of the left side of the **heart**. The damage **can** cause valve stenosis, valve regurgitation and/or damage to the **heart** muscle. (heartandstroke.ca)



How can a person obtain it?

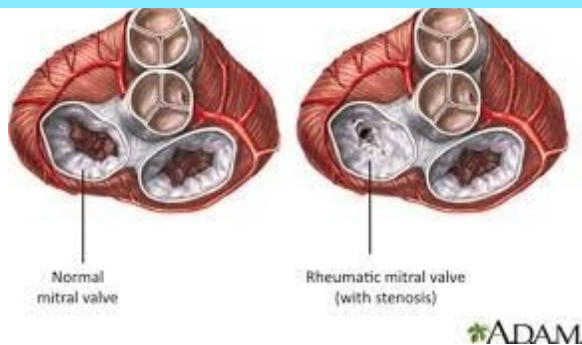
Rheumatic heart disease is caused by Rheumatic fever. Bacteria called group A Streptococcus or group A strep cause **strep throat** and **scarlet fever**. It usually takes about 1 to 5 weeks after **strep throat** or **scarlet fever** for rheumatic fever to develop. Rheumatic fever is thought to be caused by a response of the body's defense system – the immune system. (www.cdc.gov)



How can it be detected?

People with rheumatic heart disease will have or recently had a strep infection. **A throat culture or blood test may be used to check for strep.** They may have a murmur or rub that may be heard during a routine physical exam. The murmur

is caused by the blood leaking around the damaged valve. The rub is caused when the inflamed heart tissues move or rub against each other. (www.hopkinsmedicine.org)



How can it be prevented?

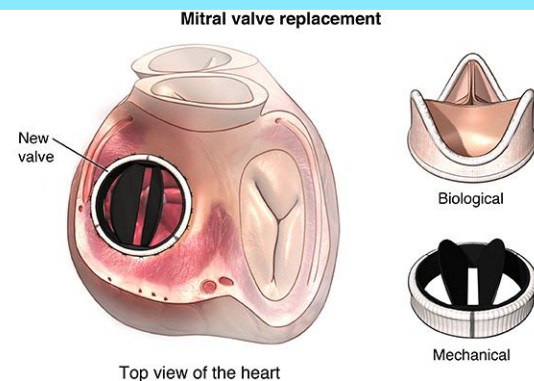
Rheumatic heart disease can be prevented by **preventing strep infections or treating them with antibiotics** when they do occur. It's important to take antibiotics as prescribed and to complete them as instructed, even if you feel better after a few days.

(hopkins.medicine.org)



How is it treated?

Treatment depends in large part on how much damage has been done to the heart valves. In severe cases, treatment may include surgery to replace or repair a badly damaged valve. People who have had rheumatic fever are often given daily or monthly antibiotic treatments, possibly for life, to prevent recurrent infections and lower the risk of further heart damage. To reduce inflammation, aspirin, steroids, or non-steroidal medicines may be given. (hopkinsmedicine.org)



♥ Thank you for reading and be safe! ♥