

Notice about Strep A/Scarlet Fever

Group A streptococcus (GAS) is a common bacteria. Lots of us carry it in our throats and on our skin and it doesn't always result in illness. However, GAS does cause a number of infections, some mild and some more serious.

The most serious infections linked to GAS come from invasive Group A Strep, known as iGAS. These infections are caused by the bacteria getting into parts of the body where it is not normally found, such as the lungs or bloodstream. In rare cases an iGAS infection can be fatal.

Currently, there is no evidence that a new strain is circulating and the increase is most likely related to high amounts of circulating bacteria and social mixing.

NHS Norfolk and Waveney has published information and advice on its website about Strep A, including symptoms to look out for and guidance about what to do - <https://improvinglivesnw.org.uk/group-a-streptococcus-gas-and-scarlet-fever/>

We are receiving a number of enquiries about suspected cases of Group A Strep infections in children. Our practice continues to be very busy handling enquiries, and staff are working hard to provide the best possible care for patients. We would ask that people are patient and understanding at this time.

If you feel that your child seems seriously unwell, you should trust your own judgement. Please contact NHS 111 online at 111.nhs.uk or call 11 if you suspect your child has scarlet fever. Please expect to wait a little longer than usual as 111 are experiencing a high number of enquiries.

Good hand and respiratory hygiene are important in reducing the risk of picking up, or spreading, infections. Please ensure children wash their hands properly with soap and warm water for 20 seconds, use a tissue to catch coughs and sneezes, and keep away from others when feeling unwell.

If your child has been invited to get their flu vaccine nasal spray by their GP, please take up this offer to help protect them from flu this winter.

Just One Norfolk also have a range of support and advice around children's general health, wellbeing and development - <https://www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/>.