If you have rheumatic fever or rheumatic heart disease, you need a penicillin needle every 21–28 days. Miss one needle and you could miss out on a whole lot more.
Thank you

The SA Rheumatic Heart Disease Control Program would like to thank the Aboriginal community of South Australia and all the Aboriginal health workers, nurses and other health staff for their valuable input and participation in the development of this resource.

We would like to acknowledge Aboriginal people as Australia’s first peoples and as the traditional custodians of the land that we work on. We acknowledge the deep feelings of attachment and relationship of Aboriginal people to country.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are advised that this document may contain sensitive material including names and or images of deceased persons.
I want to make it somewhere in life

Isiah (Narangga & Ngarrandjeri)
Your heart has four valves in it. These valves act like one way doors. The doors make sure the blood moves through your heart in the right direction. This keeps your heart going strong.
FEBRUARY

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Don't miss out on the things you love.

Lizzy and Suzanne (APY Lands)

We don't want to be late for school.
WHAT IS RHEUMATIC FEVER?

Rheumatic fever is caused by the ‘strep’ germ. This germ likes to set up camp in your throat or your skin and can cause damage to your heart.

If you get a sore throat or skin sores, go to the clinic for treatment.
We want to be our best at soccer

Leshay and Bruce
(APY Lands)
Rheumatic fever can cause:
1. joint pain
2. fever
3. jerky movements

If you have any of these signs, go to the clinic and ask to see your doctor, nurse or health worker.
We like to go hunting for kangaroos.
Rheumatic heart disease is long term damage to your heart from rheumatic fever.

The valves of the heart (the doors) become stretched and scarred and they don’t work like they should.
MAY

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DON'T MISS OUT ON THE THINGS YOU LOVE.

I want to travel the world one day

Jai (Ngarrindjeri & Mackay, Qld) and his Mum Frances (Raukkan)
RHEUMATIC FEVER CAN COME BACK AGAIN

Every time you have rheumatic fever, your heart damage can get worse.

It is important to protect your heart from the strep germ.
We want to keep fit to coach the footy team.
The strep germ can be killed with medicine called penicillin.

Penicillin protects you and keeps your heart strong.

Even if you are feeling good you still need to have your needles.

Having your needles on time means you won’t get crook again with rheumatic fever.

STAY HEALTHY WITH REGULAR NEEDLES
We want to keep happy and healthy.
YOU NEED A NEEDLE EVERY FEW WEEKS

Penicillin needles are every 21-28 days (or every 3-4 weeks).

You need penicillin in your body all the time to kill any strep germs.

Day 28 is the last possible day to have your needle. After that your heart won’t be protected.

Having your needles on time means you won’t get crook again with rheumatic fever.
We stay strong for our baby daughter.
If you have all of your needles from the start, you will most likely be able to stop when you turn ___.

Sometimes you might need to be on them for longer. Your doctor will decide this.

Having your needles on time means you won’t get crook again with rheumatic fever.
It's important to have your needle every 21-28 days.

Dr Chris Zeitz (SA Cardiologist)
OTHER APPOINTMENTS ARE IMPORTANT TOO

Seeing your specialist (heart doctor) will also help keep your heart strong – it is important to have your heart checked regularly with an ultrasound called an echocardiogram.

Clean and healthy teeth help keep the bugs away, so go to the dentist every 6 - 12 months.
I want to finish my studies to become a registered nurse.
If you or a family member have any of these signs, go to the clinic and speak to a doctor, nurse or health worker.
I want to keep fit and be around for my son.

Charlotte

(Arabana & Andyamathanha)
Keep your heart going strong by having your needles or reminding your family member to have their needles on time or before day 28 at the very latest.

Having them on time means you won’t get crook again with rheumatic fever.

The sticker will help you remember when your next needle is due.
Emmanuel (Wirangu) and his daughters

I have my needles for my girls
WHY SHOULD I GET MY NEEDLES?

My heart needs to stay strong because I don’t want to miss out on the things I love.

These are my reasons for looking after my heart:

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