

# How to reduce pain

### Information for patients

**There are many options to reduce the pain of the injections and you have the right to know what these are. This information is to help you talk to health staff and to make a decision that is right for you.**

- ✓ **Don't have the penicillin injection cold.** Ask the nurse or Aboriginal health worker to take the **penicillin out of the fridge 15 minutes before the injection.** Hold it in your hands to warm it up.
- ✓ **Ask for the injection to be given very slowly, over 2-3 minutes.**
- ✓ Take pain medicine before the injection, but only the amount recommended on the packet.
- ✓ Other options you can ask for include:
  - > An ice pack (wrapped in cloth) on the injection site before the injection.
  - > Lidocaine (a local pain blocking medication) added to the penicillin and given in the same injection.
  - > EMLA cream (a skin anaesthetic). It can go on the skin on the injection site 15-30 minutes beforehand but works best if it goes on 60 minutes before the injection.
  - > Ethylchloride (Cold Spray). It is sprayed onto the skin just before the injection.
  - > Buzzy4Shots device - a vibrating ice pack that goes on the injection site and stays on during the injection. Good for kids.
  - > Bionix Shot Blocker. It is a plastic disc with small bumps on the back. When it's pressed on the skin at the injection site, it distracts you from pain.

The penicillin injection needs to go into a big muscle, like your bottom, hip or thigh.

Don't have the penicillin injections into your arm.

The penicillin injection will stop the Strep germ from causing rheumatic fever for up to 28 days.

You should **not stop having the penicillin injections** without asking your heart doctor (cardiologist), or you could get rheumatic fever again.

Rheumatic fever can cause more damage to the heart if you get it again.

Always tell health staff if you have any allergies.

### After the injection:



Move around as soon as possible.



Apply heat packs/ cold packs as per your preference.



If you have any worries, talk to your doctor, nurse or Aboriginal health practitioner.

## For parents and caregivers:

- ☺ Reassure your child that the injection is important for them to be healthy.
- ☺ Distract your child by talking, playing games, or looking at a phone, iPad or book.
- ☺ Tell your child's teacher that your child needs the penicillin injections every month and that your child might be sore after the injection.
- ☺ **Make an appointment at the clinic for your child's next injection, every month.**
- ☺ Use the RHD phone app or calendar on your phone to remind yourself when the next injection is due (ask your Aboriginal health practitioner or nurse, or look at the RHD website: [rhdaustralia.org.au](http://rhdaustralia.org.au)).
- ☺ **Is your child on the Rheumatic Heart Disease Register?  
Ask your Aboriginal health worker, nurse or doctor.**
- ☺ If your child has a sore throat, skin sores, joint pain or fever  
– **go to the clinic for treatment.**

### The best way to stop rheumatic fever is to:

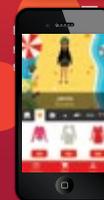
- ✓ Have penicillin injections every 21-28 days.
- ✓ Wash your hands and body every day, clean your teeth in the morning and night. Wash bed sheets, towels and clothes regularly.



## Free rheumatic fever treatment reminder app

Treatment Tracker is a reminder app for young people on penicillin injections for the prevention of rheumatic fever. Designed to:

- ✓ Remind users of their injection date
- ✓ Motivate them to get their injection on time



[www.rhdaustralia.org.au/treatment-tracker-app](http://www.rhdaustralia.org.au/treatment-tracker-app)

For more information

[sahealth.sa.gov.au/rhd](http://sahealth.sa.gov.au/rhd)

[rhdaustralia.org.au](http://rhdaustralia.org.au)

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