

Rheumatic Heart Disease

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Abstract

Rheumatic heart disease is a condition in which the heart valves have been permanently damaged by rheumatic fever. Rheumatic fever is an inflammatory disease that can affect many connective tissues, especially in the heart. Untreated or under-treated strep infections put a person at increased risk.

What causes rheumatic heart disease? Rheumatic heart disease is caused by rheumatic fever, an inflammatory disease that can affect many connective tissues, especially in the heart, joints, skin, or brain. The heart valves can be inflamed and become scarred over time

Key words: Rheumatic, Heart Disease

INTRODUCTION

The relative survival was 96.9% (95% CI 96.1–97.5%) at one year and 81.2% (95% CI 79.2–83.0%) at five years (S3 Fig). The risk of death among RHD/ARF patients increased with age over and above background rates; there was also increased risk for both male and intake patients.

Antibiotic therapy has sharply reduced the incidence and mortality rate of rheumatic fever/rheumatic heart disease. To reduce inflammation, aspirin, steroids, or non-steroidal medications may be given. Surgery may be necessary to repair or replace the damaged valve.

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Rheumatic fever, an inflammatory disease, can affect many connective tissues, especially in the heart, joints, skin, or brain. The infection often causes heart damage, particularly scarring of the heart valves, forcing the heart to work harder to pump blood.

It is not clear why some people who are infected with group A Streptococcus bacteria go on to develop rheumatic fever, while others do not; however, it appears that some families may have a genetic susceptibility to develop the condition.

What are possible complications of rheumatic heart disease?

- Heart failure. This can occur from either a severely narrowed leaking heart valve.
- Bacterial endocarditis. This is an infection of the inner lining of the heart.
- Complications of pregnancy and delivery due to heart damage.
- Ruptured heart valve.

Ideally, ARF and RHD can be prevented. Antibiotic therapy (such as penicillin) to treat Group A Streptococcus throat infection can dramatically reduce the risk of ARF and its complication, rheumatic heart disease. If ARF or RHD do occur, long-term antibiotics can reduce progression to more severe disease.

The goals of treatment for rheumatic fever are to destroy remaining group A streptococcal bacteria, relieve symptoms, control inflammation and prevent the condition from returning. Treatments include: Antibiotics. Your child's doctor will prescribe penicillin or another antibiotic to eliminate remaining strep bacteria.

Simply put, if you take care of yourself and make the necessary changes, you can live a long, full life in spite of your heart disease diagnosis. It could add years, even decades, to your life. On the other hand, if you pursue a high-risk lifestyle you could find yourself in serious trouble. A: Although we can't cure heart disease, we can make it better. Most forms of heart disease are very treatable today. There is some evidence that normalizing high blood pressure and lowering cholesterol to very low levels will partially reverse plaques in the coronary arteries. There are four stages of heart failure (Stage A, B, C and D). The stages range from "high risk of developing heart failure" to "advanced heart failure," and provide treatment plans. The mainstay antibiotic is IM benzathine benzyl penicillin. Oral phenoxymethylpenicillin and erythromycin are also used as alternatives. These three antibiotics, in the required dosage forms are on the current EMLc. No additional antibiotic agents have been identified to date.