

Issued: 7 October 2026

Issued to: All clinicians

Acute post streptococcal glomerulonephritis (APSGN) in Barkly and Central Australia

Situation

- There have been 8 notifications of APSGN in the Barkly and Central Australia Regions of the NT in 2026 YTD with all 5 cases notified from the Barkly Region having occurred since July.
- Several cases of APSGN were notified across 2022 and 2023, with sporadic cases reported in Central Australia since then. Prior to July 2026, the last notified case of APSGN in the Barkly Region occurred in June 2024.
- APSGN is an immunological syndrome affecting the kidneys, resulting from a preceding group A streptococcal (GAS) infection. GAS typically causes skin sores (impetigo) or sore throat ("strep throat") and causes invasive GAS disease at nationally high rates in addition to the other GAS sequelae diseases of, acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease, at the highest rates reported globally.
- APSGN is a notifiable disease in the NT.

Who is at risk

- APSGN most commonly affects children between 1 and 17 years of age but does occur in adults infrequently.
- GAS infection is spread person-to-person through:
 - Respiratory droplets such as from coughing, sneezing or talking
 - Contact with bacteria on the skin or contaminated surfaces and objects

Signs and symptoms

- For children presenting with any of 1) puffy face, 2) skin sores or 3) dark coloured urine, please check:
 - Weight (look for sudden increases - due to water retention)

- Blood pressure (that is high for age)
- Urine (look for presence of blood and protein)
- Oedema (peripheral and/or facial)
- If APSGN is suspected, please notify the NT CDC as well as the covering GP or RMP and consider admission to an acute hospital setting.

Treatment

- All GAS throat and skin infections should be treated with appropriate antibiotics to prevent APSGN and other complications.
- Contact tracing should be carried out for all probable and confirmed cases. Prophylactic antibiotics are recommended for all contacts of aged between 1 and 14 years of age. All contacts should receive education and clinical assessment for symptoms of APSGN, skin sores, sore throat and scabies.

Prevention

- Encourage patients and their families to reduce the amount of group A streptococcal bacteria on skin by regular washing hands, bodies, bedding and clothing.
- Scabies infestation is the major cause of infected skin sores in the NT that carry GAS. Treat all sore throat/ skin sores, scabies and other skin diseases as per [CARPA](#) and promote that patients' families and household members with these conditions should get treated following the [NT Public Health Guidelines for APSGN](#).

Further Information

- For more information and resources including the NT Public Health Guidelines for APSGN go to [NT Health](#).
- [Tropical Health Orientation Manual \(THOM\) 2025 for health practitioners in Northern Australia](#)
- Keep up to date with this alert at [Health alerts | NT Health](#).

Contact & advice

Please contact the Surveillance and Response Unit at NT CDC on 08 8922 8044, or local CDC units below, for additional guidance.

Tennant Creek CDC	P: 08 8962 4259 E: cdcbarkly.health@nt.gov.au
Alice Springs CDC	P: 08 8951 7540 F: 08 8951 7900 E: cdccentral.health@nt.gov.au

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