

**Limb or joint pain in a school-aged Indigenous child?**

**Assume acute rheumatic fever until proven otherwise.**

Typical presenting symptoms:

- fever, malaise
- one or more painful joints
- unable to walk or use a limb
- unusual movements (chorea)

**Acute rheumatic fever is common in school-aged Indigenous children in northern Australia.**

**Management:**

- discuss the child with a paediatrician
- if rheumatic fever is likely the child should be admitted and aspirin and benzathine penicillin commenced
- diagnostic tests should always include ESR, CRP, throat swab, streptococcal serology (ASOT, antiDNAseB), ECG and ECHO
- notify the case to the Tropical Population Health Network

**THINK  
ARF.**