

Invasive Group A Strep (iGAS)

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In news– Many children have died recently from an invasive condition caused by iGAS.

What is iGAS?

- Strep A – or Group A streptococcus (GAS) – **is a type of bacterium found in the throat and on the skin.**
- The illness can also **cause other respiratory and skin infections, such as Strep throat, impetigo and scarlet fever.**
- **On rare occasions, the bacteria can get into the bloodstream and cause an illness called invasive Group A Strep (iGAS).**
- While still uncommon, there has been an increase in invasive Strep A cases in 2022, particularly in children under 10.
- It can be **spread through coughs, sneezes and skin-to-skin contact.**
- While scarlet fever is usually a mild illness, **it is highly infectious.**
- **Symptoms** for Strep A can include pain when swallowing, fever, swollen tonsils with white patches, a headache, swollen neck glands, a high temperature or a skin rash.
- **A red body rash with a sandpapery feel can also be a symptom.** On darker skin, the rash can sometimes be more difficult to detect visually, but will still have a sandpapery feel.
- Early on in the illness, the bacteria can cause a whitish coating to appear on the tongue, which eventually peels, leaving the tongue red, **swollen and covered in bumps also known as “strawberry tongue”.**

What is Strep A?

- A type of bacteria sometimes found in the throat or on the skin
- Very rare but can cause severe/life threatening illness and be contagious
- Treatable with antibiotics

What are the symptoms?



Most healthy people remain symptom free



Scarlet fever (high temperature, sore throat, swollen neck glands, rash)



Throat infection



Skin infections

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/strep-throat/>

Source: NHS

