What is Group A Streptococcal Disease?
Group A streptococcal disease is an illness caused by the bacteria group A streptococcus. People may carry group A streptococci in the throat or on the skin and have no symptoms of illness. Most group A streptococcal infections are relatively mild illnesses such as “strep throat” or impetigo. On rare occasions, these bacteria can cause other severe and even life-threatening diseases, such as Toxic Shock Syndrome.

Who gets Group A Streptococcal Disease?
Group A streptococcal disease can occur in people of all ages. It is most commonly seen in children. Severe illness caused by group A streptococci occur most frequently in people with chronic diseases such as cancer, diabetes, kidney failure requiring dialysis, and people who use medications such as steroids.

What are the symptoms of Group A Streptococcal Disease?
The symptoms of group A streptococcal disease are dependent on the illness that it is causing. Common symptoms of infection include fever, chills, sore throat, painful swallowing, malaise, headache, abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, and skin rash.

How is Group A Streptococcal Disease spread?
The bacteria that cause disease are spread through direct contact with the mucus from the nose or throat of persons who are infected or through contact with infected wounds or sores on the skin. Ill people, such as those who have strep throat or skin infections, are the most likely to spread the infection.

How soon do symptoms appear?
The time it takes for symptoms to appear is relatively short, one to three days after exposure.