



Government of **Western Australia**  
**North Metropolitan Health Service**  
Mental Health, Public Health and Dental Services



Acknowledgment of the Take 5 concept  
developed by RPH

# Remember Think of Leprosy when...



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**Approved by:** NMHS Public Health Manager's Group Committee  
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# Leprosy in Australia

In Australia the majority of Leprosy cases occur in people who were born overseas.

Aboriginal Australians are also at higher risk.

The diagnosis is often difficult to make early in the course of infection and requires a high degree of clinical suspicion.

**Note: Countries with higher incidence of Leprosy include India, Indonesia, Brazil, Philippines, Nepal, Sri Lanka, African and Western Pacific countries**



# Patients born in high risk regions who have...

- Skin lesions: pale, reddish, often with loss of sensation
- Numbness and tingling hands and/or feet
- Weakness of eyelids, hands and feet
- Nerve pain or tenderness
- Visible deformity

**THINK Leprosy**

Note: These symptoms have often been present for many months when the patient presents.



# Ensure that you...

Document clinical findings including description of the lesion and any enlargement or tenderness of peripheral nerves

Test peripheral nerve function

If possible, obtain a biopsy of skin from edge of the skin lesion to send to anatomical pathology

Enquire about: family history or known contact with leprosy

Elliptical or punch skin biopsy needs to be sent to anatomical pathology requesting a **Fite stain** for leprosy



# Remember...

- If you have a patient who was born or has resided in a high incidence region (including Aboriginal Australians) **AND**
- has unexplained skin lesions and/or nerve problems

## Consider Leprosy

- Document clinical findings
- Test for peripheral nerve function
- Collect skin biopsy and request Fite-faraco stain for Leprosy
- Contact WA TB Control Program on 9222 8500

**For more information see the following link:**  
**[Diagnosis and Management of Hansen's disease](#)**

Please complete the 1 minute evaluation of this Take 5 education [HERE](#).