

MENINGOCOCCAL DISEASE

****Reportable to local or state health department****

Consult the health department before posting/distributing Parent/Guardian fact sheet.

This disease most often affects children and young adults.

Meningococcal disease is a medical emergency that requires prompt treatment.

Vaccination may help prevent some cases of this illness.

CAUSE Neisseria meningitidis bacteria.

SYMPTOMS

- Bacteremia - sudden onset of fever, chills, and tiredness; sometimes a rash.
- Meningitis - fever, vomiting, headache, stiff neck, extreme sleepiness, confusion, irritability, and lack of appetite; sometimes a rash or seizures.

SPREAD Through direct contact with secretions of the nose and throat of an infected person; more common among people with close personal contact or in households, childcare settings, or schools where there is close prolonged physical contact (e.g., through kissing, sharing food, beverages, toothbrushes, or cigarettes).

Exposures rarely results in serious illness.

INCUBATION It takes 1 to 10 days, but usually 3 to 4 days, from the time a person is exposed to the bacteria until symptoms begin.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD Until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins.

EXCLUSION Childcare and School: Until the child has been on appropriate antibiotics for at least 24 hours and is well enough to participate in routine activities.

The childcare provider or school may choose to exclude exposed staff and attendees until preventive treatment has been started if there is concern that they will not follow through with recommended preventive treatment otherwise.

DIAGNOSIS Laboratory tests can be done to detect N. meningitidis.

TREATMENT Meningococcal disease is caused by bacteria and can be treated with antibiotics.

Exposed persons should contact a healthcare provider at the first signs of meningococcal disease.

PREVENTION/ CONTROL

- Public health will make recommendations to the childcare, school, and other contacts. Antibiotics and/or vaccine may be recommended.
- Antibiotics to prevent meningitis are recommended for:
 - Household contacts
 - Overnight visitors to the household
 - Persons who had contact with the secretions from the mouth or throat through:
 - Mouth-to-mouth resuscitation or kissing
 - Sharing food (eating from the same utensils, plate, etc.)
 - Sharing beverages (drinking from the same cup, can, glass, or straw)
 - Sharing cigarettes, cigars, snuff, pipes, etc.
 - Sharing lip balm, lipstick, lip gloss, etc.
 - Sharing a toothbrush

The following activities ARE NOT considered direct contact with the person with meningitis: sharing a book or pencil, walking down the hall, or sitting or standing next to them (within 3 feet) for < 8 hours.

- Persons who have been exposed should remain under medical observation because preventive antibiotics are not always completely effective. If an exposed person develops a fever, call a healthcare provider right away.
- DO NOT share drink containers and cups or silverware. Wash and sanitize all dishes and silverware after each use.
- Clean and sanitize mouthed toys, objects, and surfaces. Clean and disinfect other items or surfaces that come in contact with secretions from the nose or mouth.

There are three types of meningococcal vaccines used in the US:

- Meningococcal conjugate or MenACWY vaccines protect against serotypes A, C, W, and Y of *Neisseria meningitidis* bacteria
 - All 11- to 12-year-olds should get a MenACWY vaccine, with a booster at 16 years old
 - Children between 2 months and 10 years old should get a MenACWY vaccine if they:
 - Have a rare type of immune disorder called complement component deficiency
 - Are taking a type of medicine called a complement inhibitor

- Have a damaged spleen or sickle cell disease, or their spleen has been removed
- Have HIV
- Traveling to or residing in countries in which serogroup A, C, W, or Y meningococcal disease outbreak
- Serogroup B meningococcal or MenB vaccines protect against one type: serogroup B of *Neisseria meningitidis* bacteria
 - Any teen may choose to get a MenB vaccine, and teens should get it if they:
 - Have a rare type of immune disorder called complement component deficiency
 - Are taking a type of medicine called a complement inhibitor
 - Have a damaged spleen or sickle cell disease, or their spleen has been removed
 - Are part of a population identified to be at increased risk because of a serogroup B meningococcal disease outbreak
 - Children between 2 months and 10 years old should get a MenB vaccine if they:
 - Have a rare type of immune disorder called complement component deficiency
 - Are taking a type of medicine called a complement inhibitor
 - Have a damaged spleen or sickle cell disease, or their spleen has been removed
 - Are part of a population identified to be at increased risk because of a serogroup B meningococcal disease outbreak

Pentavalent or MenABCWY vaccine may be given to patients who choose to get MenB and Men ACWY at the same time.

For more information, please contact your local health department.

[Southern Nevada Health District](#) (Clark County) 775-759-1300 (24 hours)

[Northern Nevada Public Health](#) (Washoe County) 775-328-2447 (24 hours)

[Carson City Health & Human Services](#) (Carson City, Douglas, Lyon Counties) 775-887-2190 (24 hours)

[Division of Public and Behavioral Health](#) (All other Counties) 775-400-0333 (24 hours)

Email: dpbhepi@health.nv.gov