



BACTERIAL MENINGITIS

(Haemophilus influenzae [Hib] and Streptococcus pneumoniae)

What is it?

- Swelling of the membranes around the spinal cord or brain caused by an infection

What is the cause?

- Different bacteria can cause bacterial meningitis

What are symptoms that could occur?

- Fever
- Severe headache
- Vomiting/nausea
- Stiff neck and back
- Confusion
- Extreme weakness
- Bulging soft spots on a baby's head
- Coma

Children who have any of the above symptoms need to see a physician right away.

Is it contagious?

- Spread person-to-person by inhalation of respiratory droplets or by direct contact with respiratory secretions.
- Bacterial meningitis is more common in infants and children, and adults weakened by illness, drugs or old age

How is it diagnosed and treated?

- Physician evaluation and laboratory analysis
- Treated with antibiotics specific to the type of bacteria

How can bacterial meningitis be prevented?

- Avoid sharing eating utensils, coming in contact with saliva, (either thru secretions or via shared eating utensils), lip gloss/stick, straws, glasses, cigarettes or kissing.
- Frequent hand washing and disposal of tissues in trash containers
- Routine childhood immunizations, especially against Hib
- Vaccination is recommended for students entering college, especially those who will be living in dormitories
- Medication may be prescribed for high risk contacts only, and is generally not indicated for classmates in the school setting. Pre-school settings may differ.

Should the sick child be isolated?

- Yes, away from other people until treatment has started and the physician determines the child is not contagious.

When can the child return to day care or school?

- Following physician recommendation and the child is feeling well

Genesee County Health Department
630 S. Saginaw Street
Flint, Michigan 48502
www.gchd.us

Should schools do special cleaning?

- No. The bacteria cannot live for more than a few minutes outside the body, so special cleaning is not necessary. Routine cleaning with EPA approved products is recommended.

Are there reporting requirements?

- **Immediately notify** the Health Department of suspected or confirmed cases at **257-1017**.

If I have any other questions, whom can I contact?

- Call the Genesee County Health Department, 257-3612

This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. For more information, call your health care provider.

5/27/2004