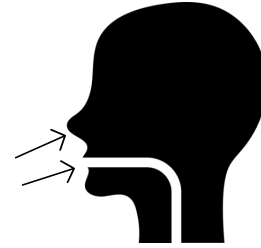


Meningococcal Disease

Fact Sheet



Meningococcal disease is a serious illness caused by the bacteria *Neisseria meningitidis*. The bacteria can cause an infection of the lining of the brain and spine or a blood infection. Rarely the bacteria cause pneumonia.

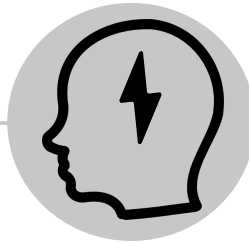


The bacteria are found in the nose and throat. People spread the bacteria through saliva or spit. It takes close or lengthy contact to spread the disease.

Signs and Symptoms



High Fever



Headache



Stiff Neck



Nausea and Vomiting



Photophobia (Eyes Being Sensitive to Light)



Confusion

Symptoms usually start within four days after exposure to the bacteria, but can range from one to ten days.



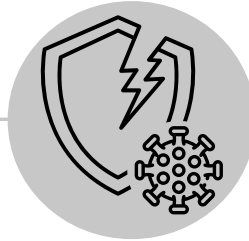
Talk to a health care provider if you think you have meningococcal disease. A doctor may collect blood or spinal fluid to test for meningococcal disease. Antibiotics can be used to treat this disease.

People Most At Risk

Anyone can get meningococcal disease, but it is more common in:



- Infants
- Teens and young adults
- Older adults



People with certain medical conditions that weaken the immune system



People who live in group settings, like dorms or shelters

Other risk factors include people who work in a laboratory setting and people who travel to sub-Saharan Africa.

Close Contacts



Close contacts of someone with this disease might include:

- household members
- intimate contacts
- daycare playmates
- people who have kissed or shared foods or drinks

People who have close contact with a case might need preventative treatment. If so, antibiotics should be taken as soon as possible.

Prevention



Vaccination is the best way to prevent meningococcal disease. Talk to your health care provider to make sure you are up-to-date.

Vaccines cannot prevent all types of this disease, so it is important to maintain healthy habits, like getting plenty of rest and not having close contact with people who are sick.

For More Information, Visit:



1. www.maine.gov/dhhs/meningococcal
2. www.cdc.gov/meningococcal

You can also call Maine CDC at 1-800-821-5821.