



What is bacterial meningitis?

- Infection causing swelling of the membranes around the spinal cord or brain caused by many kinds of bacteria, but most commonly:
 - *Streptococcus pneumoniae* (infants)
 - *Neisseria meningitis* (children, teens, and young adults)
 - *Haemophilus Influenzae* – HiB (infants and children, rare because of HiB vaccine)

How is it spread?

- Spread person-to-person by inhalation of respiratory droplets or by direct contact with respiratory secretions, such as through kissing, sharing utensils, or drinking glasses
- More common in infants and children, and adults weakened by illness, drugs or old age

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

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 through 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

Should the sick individual be isolated?

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

When can the individual return to the general population?

- Following physician recommendation and when the individual is feeling well

Should facilities 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, 257-1017