



FACT SHEET: Meningitis

Meningitis is a swelling of the protective membranes covering the brain and spinal cord caused by either a bacteria or virus and can rapidly progress and be life-threatening.

The Westchester County Department of Health will be immediately contacted if a case is reported in the school. Please answer any Connect Ed phone calls from the district for any further instructions that may be necessary.

Meningitis, depending on the causative organism, can be spread by:

- Respiratory secretions, droplets
- Contact with someone by coughing or sneezing and breathing in the organism
- Close intimate contact, i.e. kissing
- Sometimes through food preparation

Please monitor your child for the following symptoms, which can occur suddenly and rapidly progress over the next 3-7 days:

Fever	Stiff neck	Eyes sensitive to light
Headache	Nausea/Vomiting	Confusion

If any symptoms develop emergency treatment is needed: *call your doctor, go to the emergency room, or call 911.* Treatment needs to be started as soon as possible

Prevention:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Avoid people that are sick
- Vaccinations are the most effective way to prevent many types of meningitis
- Depending on the cause of meningitis, antibiotics may be prescribed for contacts identified

Individuals at High Risk: Always consult with your healthcare provider with any questions or concerns. Complications can be life-threatening. Anyone with underlying conditions, compromised immune system, pregnancy, elderly, newborns, or people without a spleen should consult with their doctor immediately.

Return to School: Your child can return to school and resume activities once they are cleared by their healthcare provider.

Any questions please email/call your school nurse, (found on your home school website).

For more information: www.cdc.gov/meningitis