

Meningitis

Meningitis is an infection of the protective membranes that surround the brain and spinal cord (meninges).

Meningitis is usually caused by a bacterial or viral infection. Bacterial Meningitis is rarer but more serious than viral Meningitis.

It can affect anyone, but is most common in babies, young children, teenagers and young adults.

Meningitis can be very serious if not treated quickly.

It can cause life-threatening blood poisoning (Septicemia) and result in permanent damage to the brain or nerves.

A number of vaccinations are available that offer some protection against Meningitis.



Your child can return to school/nursery once fully recovered and is fit and well and showing no other symptoms. If your GP/hospital confirm that your child has Meningitis please notify the school as soon as possible.

Symptoms of Meningitis

Symptoms of Meningitis develop suddenly and can include:

- a high temperature (fever) of 38C (100.4F) or above
- being sick
- a headache
- a rash that does not fade when a glass is rolled over it (but this will not always develop)
- a stiff neck
- a dislike of bright lights
- drowsiness or unresponsiveness
- fits (seizures)



These symptoms can appear in any order. You do not always get all the symptoms.

When to get medical help

You should get medical advice as soon as possible if you're concerned that you or your child could have Meningitis.

Trust your instincts and do not wait until a rash develops.

Call 999 for an ambulance or go to your nearest A&E department immediately if you think you or your child might be seriously ill.

Call NHS 111 or your GP surgery for advice if you're not sure if it's anything serious or you think you may have been exposed to someone with Meningitis.

How Meningitis is spread

Meningitis is usually caused by a bacterial or viral infection.

Bacterial Meningitis is rarer but more serious than viral Meningitis.

Infections that cause Meningitis can be spread through:

- sneezing
- coughing
- kissing
- sharing utensils, cutlery and toothbrushes

Meningitis is usually caught from people who carry these viruses or bacteria in their nose or throat but are not ill themselves.

It can also be caught from someone with Meningitis, but this is less common.

Vaccinations against Meningitis

Vaccinations offer some protection against certain causes of Meningitis.