



PUBLIC HEALTH FACT SHEET

MENINGITIS

Dear Parent:

This is to bring to your attention that a case of Meningitis has been reported for a student in your child's classroom and to provide you with information about this disease. If your child exhibits any of the symptoms described below, it is recommended that you consult your healthcare provider or the Department of Health in Duval County Epidemiology Program at 904-253-1850.

What is Meningitis?

- A bacterial or viral infection of the fluid surrounding the brain that may causes swelling
- There are three most common causes of bacteria causing meningitis
 - Meningococcus (*Neisseria meningitidis*)
 - Pneumococcus (*Streptococcus pneumoniae*)
 - Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib) (this is rare due to routine vaccinations)
- Viral meningitis (non-contagious/noninfectious) typically occurs during summer and early fall

What are the signs or symptoms?

- Rapid onset
- Headache
- Fever
- Stiff neck
- Nausea

How is meningitis spread?

- Direct contact with respiratory secretions (sharing food and drinking utensils, cigarettes, etc.)
- Consuming food or water contaminated with the feces of an infected person

How can meningitis be prevented?

- Bacterial meningitis – vaccination, antibiotic therapy
- Viral meningitis – use good hand washing techniques

Implications for school

- Exclude students or staff who have been diagnosed with the disease
- Must have a healthcare provider's note to return

Resources:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:
www.cdc.gov

American Academy of Pediatrics:
<https://healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/abdominal/Pages/FoodPoisoning-and-Food-Contamination.aspx>