

HAEMOPHILUS INFLUENZAE TYPE B (HIB) DISEASE

Reportable to local or state health department

Consult the health department before posting/distributing Parent/Guardian fact sheet.

Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib) can cause a number of serious illnesses, but it is not related to influenza or “stomach flu”. The number of infections in children has dropped due to use of the Hib vaccine.

CAUSE	<i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> type b bacteria.
SYMPTOMS	<p>Meningitis - unusual sleepiness, fever, stiff neck, vomiting, headache, irritability, lack of appetite.</p> <p>Cellulitis - a tender, rapid swelling of the skin, usually on the cheek or around the eye; may also have an ear infection on the same side; also a low-grade fever.</p> <p>Epiglottitis - fever, trouble swallowing, tiredness, difficult and rapid breathing (often confused with viral croup, which is a milder infection and lasts longer).</p> <p>Pneumonia - fever, cough, chest pains, difficulty breathing.</p> <p>Bacteremia - sudden onset of fever, chills, tiredness, irritability.</p> <p>Arthritis - swelling, redness, and loss of movement in the joints.</p>

Children age 2 and under are most likely to develop these infections, although those up to age 5 are still at some risk. Invasive disease most commonly occurs in children who are too young to have completed their vaccination series.

SPREAD	When a person with Hib disease coughs or sneezes tiny droplets with <i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> type b bacteria into the air and another person breathes them in. A person can also get infected from touching these secretions and then touching their mouth, eyes, or nose.
INCUBATION	Unknown; probably about 2 to 4 days from the time a person is exposed until symptoms begin.
CONTAGIOUS PERIOD	Until 24 to 48 hours after effective treatment begins.
EXCLUSION	<u>Childcare</u> : Until the child has been treated and is well enough to participate in routine activities.
DIAGNOSIS	Recommend parents/guardians call their healthcare provider immediately if their child develops fever or any other symptoms. There are lab tests to detect <i>Haemophilus</i> .
TREATMENT	Hib disease can be treated with antibiotics. Immediate treatment is necessary to prevent lasting damage or death.

PREVENTION/CONTROL

- All infants should receive Hib vaccine as part of their routine vaccination schedule. In Minnesota, all children between the ages of 2 months and 5 years who are in a licensed childcare setting are required to have Hib vaccine or they must have a legal exemption.
- Public health will make recommendations if exposed persons need to receive antibiotics and/or vaccine.

For more information, call Hennepin County HSPHD-Epidemiology at (612) 543-5230 or call your local health department.