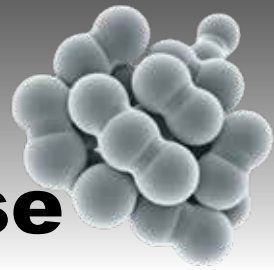


Meningitis & Meningococcal Disease



WHAT IS IT?

Meningitis is a global public health threat, causing millions of cases annually. Meningitis and meningococcal disease are not the same. **Meningococcal disease** is caused *Neisseria meningitidis*, but its symptoms can include meningitis.

Meningitis, an infection of the protective membranes called meninges that surround the brain and spinal cord, can be caused by a range of infections of bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites, with bacterial meningitis the most common.

Both can be transmitted through direct contact with an infected person's oral secretions, but meningitis could also occur through contaminated food. Transmission typically does not occur through casual contact or breathing air where an infected person has been.

WHY SHOULD I CARE?

- Rates of these conditions has increased since the pandemic.
- Anyone can be affected, but those who are immunocompromised can be more susceptible.
- Meningococcal disease and bacterial meningitis can be fatal If not treated quickly. According to the World Health Organization, up to 1 in 6 people die and 1 in 5 have severe complications and chronic health issues.
- Viral meningitis with similar symptoms is typically less severe.
- Outbreaks are most likely in crowded settings (e.g., mass gatherings, dorms) and have occurred in border migration areas.
- Immediate treatment with antibiotics is critical; vaccination is the best preventive approach.

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

Symptoms typically come on suddenly within 3 to 7 days of exposure, and can include:



fever



stiff neck



nausea/vomiting



headache



light sensitivity

WHAT DO I DO ABOUT IT?

1. If symptoms are noted, the affected person should seek emergency medical care.
2. Antibiotics can be effective.
3. Vaccines can offer protection against bacterial and viral meningitis infections as well as meningococcal disease, and can be administered to close contacts of patients.
4. Avoid contact with others when they are sick.
5. Wash hands frequently, and avoid sharing personal items.

TAG Public Health Experts have the experience and expertise to help companies and institutions successfully integrate science-driven public health approaches into their business strategy.