

## **Meningococcal infections**

Meningococci are a type of bacteria that cause serious infections. The most common infection is meningitis, which is an inflammation of the thin tissue that surrounds the brain and spinal cord. The number of Japanese patients is not so high, 30-40 per year, but most are teens and young adults. Students who live at dormitories are at high risk, so those students are recommended to get the vaccination.

### **Signs and Symptoms**

Initial symptoms of meningococcal infections include:

- Fever
  - Headache
  - Nausea
- (Flu like)

Then, the symptoms are rapidly worsen.

- Stiff neck
- Subcutaneous bleeding
- Skin rash
- Altered mental status (confusion)

Even with proper treatment, 10 to 19 in 100 patients with meningococcal infections will die within 24-48 hours after the appearance of symptoms.

### **Incubation Period**

The incubation period of this infection is 2-10 days.

### **How Meningococcal Infections Spread**

The meningococci live in the back of the nose and throat, so the bacteria can spread to others by sharing respiratory and throat secretions (saliva or spit).

- Cough, sneezing
- Drinking in turn from one PET bottle

- Sharing dishes or cups
- Kiss

### **Prevention**

Vaccines help protect against the infection. Students who live at dormitories or travelers to the meningitis belt in sub-Saharan African, etc. are at high risk, so those students are recommended to get the vaccination.

### **If You Get Meningococcal Infections**

Please avoid coming university to attend classes or to work for. Contact your department office and Health Service Center.

#### **• Standard Period of Suspension of Attendance**

Until getting no risk of infection. (Enforcement Regulations for the School Health and Safety Act)

#### **• For University Hospital Staff (including students under clinical training)**

First of all, contact Department of Infection Control, University Hospital (Tel:082-257-5372), and follow the order.

Please contact us if you have a question.

Health Service Center (email: [health@hiroshima-u.ac.jp](mailto:health@hiroshima-u.ac.jp))

### **References**

• Meningococcal disease. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <https://www.cdc.gov/meningococcal/index.html>

• Meningococcal meningitis. World Health Organization, <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/meningococcal-meningitis>