



County of Door PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

County Government Center
421 Nebraska Street
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235

Rhonda Kolberg

Director/Health Officer

(920) 746-2234

rkolberg@co.door.wi.us

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Dear Parents,

A case of meningitis, caused by the bacterium *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, has been reported in a student participating in athletic activities in which your child may have also participated. This bacterium commonly causes ear and sinus infections, conjunctivitis (eye infection) and pneumonia. It can also cause serious infections such as sepsis (blood infection) and meningitis ((inflammation of the lining of the spinal cord and brain).

This bacterium is commonly carried in the upper respiratory tract of healthy persons with no ill effect. Infants, the elderly and those with compromised immune systems are most at risk for developing serious illness from this disease. Serious illness from this organism is uncommon and vaccines against the most common strains have been developed. Your child may have already received one of these vaccines (Prevnar® 7 or Prevnar® 13) from your health care provider. The time between when a person first becomes infected and the onset of illness varies but can be as short as 1- 3 days. **Casual contacts of a case are not at risk for developing illness.**

Unlike certain other types of meningitis causing bacteria, transmission and carriage of this bacteria has NOT been shown to be prevented by antibiotic treatment of healthy contacts. **Therefore, antibiotic treatment of contacts is NOT recommended, regardless of immunization status.** The cause of this case of meningitis should not be confused with other types of meningitis that do require antibiotic treatment of contacts.

We urge parents to always contact their physician immediately if their child shows symptoms of any meningitis-like disease. There are viruses common in summer months that may also cause meningitis. Symptoms may include the sudden onset of high fever, severe headache, fatigue, lethargy, nausea and/or vomiting, stiff/rigid neck, rash, and eye sensitivity to light.

More information regarding meningitis and the differences in the types of meningitis is available at the CDC's website at <http://www.cdc.gov/meningitis/index.html>. If you have any additional questions regarding this matter, please contact your physician or the Door County Health Department.

Thank you,

Rhonda Kolberg

Rhonda Kolberg, RN, MS
Director/Health Officer