

Haemophilus Influenzae Type B (Hib) Fact Sheet

What is Hib?

Until recently, Hib was one of the most important causes of bacterial infection in young children. It may cause a variety of diseases such as meningitis (inflammation of the coverings of the spinal column and brain), blood stream infections, pneumonia, arthritis, and infections of other parts of the body.

Who gets Hib?

It can occur in any age group. Due to widespread use of Hib vaccine in children, very few cases are reported each year in the United States. It is now diagnosed more often in the elderly, unimmunized children, and people who are immunocompromised.

How is Hib spread?

Can be transmitted through direct contact with mucous or droplets from the nose and throat of an infected person.

What are the symptoms?

- Fever
- Lethargy
- Vomiting
- Stiff neck

The incubation period for Hib disease is unknown but is probably less than 1 week.

When and for how long is a person able to spread the disease?

The contagious period varies. Unless treated, it may be transmitted for as long as the organism is present in the nose and throat, even after symptoms have disappeared.

Does past infection with Hib make a person immune?

Children who had Hib when younger than 24 months of age may be at risk of getting it again. Children and adults who had it when 24 months of age or older are likely to be immune to Hib.

What is the treatment for Hib?

Antibiotics are generally used to treat serious infections. Rifampin is used in some circumstances as preventive treatment for persons who have been exposed to Hib.

What are the possible complications associated with Hib?

If Hib meningitis occurs, a certain proportion of those who recover may suffer from long-lasting neurologic problems. In some instances, cases may be fatal.

What can be done to prevent the spread of Hib?

All children should be immunized with an approved Hib vaccine beginning at 2 months of age.

This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. For more information, call your health care provider or call the Bay County Health Dept at (989) 895-4003.

Visit our website at <http://www.baycounty-mi.gov/Health/> or the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention at www.cdc.gov