



# PUBLIC FACT SHEET

## BACTERIAL MENINGITIS

### What is meningitis?

An infection caused by a bacteria which involves the tissue around the brain and spinal cord.

Ottawa County Health Department

[www.miOttawa.org](http://www.miOttawa.org)

Medline Plus/National Institutes of Health

[www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000680.htm](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000680.htm)

### How is meningitis spread?

Airborne droplets from the nose or throat of people with the bacteria.

### What are possible symptoms?

Symptoms may include:

- High fever, headache, and stiff neck in anyone over 2 years of age.
- Nausea, vomiting, bright lights hurt the eyes, confusion, and sleepiness.
- Newborns and infants may be slow or inactive, irritable, vomiting and refuse to eat.
- Seizures

### How is meningitis diagnosed?

By a laboratory test of the spinal fluid.

### What is the treatment for meningitis?

Antibiotics.

### Prevention:

There are vaccines to help prevent some types of bacterial meningitis. Contact your local health department for more information.

### For more information on meningitis: