



# WISCONSIN CHILDHOOD COMMUNICABLE DISEASES: MENINGITIS

Disease Name (aka, causative agent)	Spread by	Incubation Period (Time from exposure to symptoms)	Signs and Symptoms	Time Period When Person is Contagious	Criteria for Exclusion from School or Group
<b>Bacterial Meningitis</b>   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Hib</b> (<i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> type b)</li> <li><b>Meningococcal disease</b> (<i>Neisseria meningitidis</i>)</li> <li><b>Pneumococcal disease</b> (<i>Streptococcus pneumoniae</i>)</li> </ul>	Direct person-to-person contact with saliva and respiratory secretions	Usually 2–4 days  2–10 days; usually 3–4 days  Usually 1–4 days	May include: sudden onset of fever <sup>1</sup> , headache, stiff neck, nausea, vomiting  Rash and photophobia also common with <i>N. meningitidis</i>	7 days prior to onset until 24 hours after treatment begins	Exclude for at least 24 hours after appropriate antibiotic treatment begins
<b>Viral Meningitis</b> (Usually enterovirus)	Inhalation or contact with droplets from nose, eyes, or mouth; fecal-oral	3–6 days	May include: sudden onset of fever <sup>1</sup> , headache, stiff neck, nausea, vomiting  Respiratory or gastrointestinal symptoms may occur before symptoms of meningitis	From day before illness up to 2 weeks after onset	Exclude until fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications

## Onsite Control and Prevention Measures


**For all diseases:** Good handwashing and hygiene; cover coughs and sneezes; avoid direct saliva contact and sharing drinks, utensils, and water bottles


**Hib bacteria:** Ensure contacts under age 4 are up-to-date on vaccination after exposure or treated with antibiotics

**Meningococcal meningitis:** Direct saliva contacts should receive antibiotic treatment immediately

**Pneumococcal meningitis:** Treatment of contacts not necessary and not beneficial

**Viral meningitis:** Proper disinfection of surfaces such as changing tables with soap, water, and bleach-containing solution; treatment of contacts not necessary, no specific treatment

 = Reportable to State and local health departments

 = Vaccine preventable

<sup>1</sup>**Fever** = Temperature 100.4°F or higher, regardless of the route it is taken (mouth, rectum, armpit, ear, forehead). Only take a child's temperature if the child seems ill.

<sup>2</sup>**At risk or more likely to get sick** = Persons not immunized, with compromised immune systems, or pregnant

<sup>3</sup>**High risk settings** = Health care, child care, food service

**BUREAU OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

Wisconsin Department of Health Services

Division of Public Health

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**Three Key Criteria for Exclusion:** Most childhood illnesses do not require exclusion. Caregiver/teacher should determine if the illness 1) prevents child from participating comfortably in activities, 2) results in need for care that is greater than staff can provide without compromising health and safety of other children, or 3) poses risk of spread. If any of these criteria are met, child should be excluded regardless of the type of illness.

This chart of selected communicable diseases information is meant only as a guide to answer questions frequently asked of persons who have responsibility for groups of children in day care centers, schools, summer camps, or other similar situations. The chart is not meant to be an all-inclusive list of significant diseases, or be a comprehensive guide to all the information about each disease. More specific information about these or other diseases may be obtained from your local public health agency or at: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/disease/childhood-communicable-diseases.htm>

