



## HURON COUNTY GENERAL HEALTH DISTRICT

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**Timothy Hollinger, MPH**

Health Commissioner

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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January 27, 2010

### Possible Bacterial Meningitis Case

Norwalk, OH – A possible case of bacterial meningitis infection has been reported in Huron County. The person infected is a preschool aide at the Norwalk Catholic Schools Early Childhood Center. The aide is under a physician's care and has been on an antibiotic.

"In this case, everyone involved has done their job," said Tim Hollinger, Huron County Health Commissioner. "The medical community made an initial diagnosis of bacterial meningitis and immediately started the patient and the family on an antibiotic regimen. The laboratory at the hospital collected a sample of spinal cord fluid and began the testing process to confirm the initial diagnosis. The health department began working with the school, informing the public and working with physicians and the hospital to monitor the situation."

"Meningitis is an inflammation of the membranes that cover the brain and spinal cord," said Chris Cherry, Director of Nursing. "People sometimes refer to it as spinal meningitis. The CDC, Ohio Department of Health and the Huron County General Health District are recommending that all children attending the Norwalk Catholic Schools Early Childhood Center receive the appropriate antibiotics as a preventative measure." Please contact your child's physician to see if preventative treatment is recommended.

"Bacterial meningitis is spread through the exchange of saliva (coughing, kissing, or sharing drinks, food or utensils)," said Angela Smith Huron County Epidemiologist.

Fortunately, none of the bacteria that cause meningitis are as contagious as the common cold or the flu and they are not spread by casual contact or by simply breathing the air where a person with meningitis has been.

Common symptoms of bacterial meningitis include high fever, headache, and a stiff neck in anyone over the age of 2 years. These symptoms can develop over several hours, or they may take 1 to 2 days. Other symptoms may include nausea, vomiting, discomfort when looking into bright lights, confusion, and sleepiness.

In newborns and small infants, the classic symptoms of fever, headache, and neck stiffness may be absent

or difficult to detect, and the infant may only appear slow or inactive, or be irritable, have vomiting, or be feeding poorly. Early diagnosis and treatment is important. If symptoms occur seek medical attention immediately.

For more information, contact Chris Cherry at 419-668-1652, ext: 230

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