



## HURON COUNTY GENERAL HEALTH DISTRICT

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### Timothy Hollinger MPH

Health Commissioner

#### **Situation Background:**

- A preschool/kindergarten aide at Norwalk Catholic Early Childhood Center has been diagnosed with Bacterial Meningitis.
- The preschool/kindergarten aide helped in the preschool /kindergarten of the Norwalk Catholic Schools Early Childhood Center.
- The teacher's aide began to have symptoms on January 23.
- The teacher's aide was preliminarily diagnosed at the hospital on January 25.
- The hospital contacted the Health Department on January 25 at 4:15.
- After gathering additional information from the hospital and the Ohio Department of Health the Health Department contacted the school on January 25 at 6:15
- The teacher's aide and her immediate family were treated with antibiotics.
- Your child could have been exposed.
- As a precaution the Health Department is recommending a preventive dosage of antibiotics.
- Your family physician should be contacted for their recommendation.

#### **The Disease:**

- Bacterial Meningitis is the inflammation of the membranes that cover the brain and spinal cord.
- Bacterial Meningitis is not a highly contagious disease; it is a mildly contagious disease.
- It is not as contagious as the common cold or flu.
- The bacteria spread from person to person through the exchange of saliva or throat secretions.
- The spread of the disease requires very close contact.
- Examples include sharing food, drinking glasses and eating utensils. Additionally kissing or coughing may spread the saliva and the bacteria it contains.
- Bacteria are not spread by casual contact or by simply breathing the air where a person with meningitis has been.

#### **Contagious period:**

- Generally the disease can be spread up to 2 to 4 days.
- A conservative proactive approach would consider the spread up to 10 days.
- We are presently at the end of the time period considered contagious.

#### **Symptoms:**

Classic symptoms can develop over several hours, or may take up to 2 to 4 days:

- High fever
- Headache
- Very stiff, sore neck

Other symptoms may include:

- Red or purple skin rash
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Photophobia (sensitivity to bright lights)
- Sleepiness
- Mental confusion