



Connie Beck, Director
Social Services | Public Health | Mental Health

news release

Aug. 28, 2017

Eureka child hospitalized with meningitis

A Eureka child has been transferred to an out-of-county hospital with a confirmed case of *Neisseria meningitidis*, which is a contagious form of bacterial meningitis.

The child was sick for several days before seeking medical care, and the Public Health Branch of the Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) is notifying individuals who may have been exposed so that they can be treated prophylactically with antibiotics.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), symptoms of meningococcal meningitis include sudden fever, headache and stiff neck. Other symptoms can include nausea, vomiting, confusion and increased sensitivity to light.

Children and infants may show different signs, such as inactivity, irritability, vomiting or poor reflexes. Meningococcal bacteria can also infect the blood which can lead to tiredness, cold hands and feet, chills, severe aches and pain, fast breathing, diarrhea and a dark purple rash. Meningococcal disease is very serious and can be fatal.

The California Department of Public Health states that meningococcal disease can be spread by kissing an infected person or by other intimate contact, such as sharing toothbrushes or utensils. If you are sick and suspect you may have a meningococcal illness, seek medical attention immediately.

Prevention measures involve reducing exposure to germs. The CDC advises washing your hands often. If soap and water aren't available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol. Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth. If you need to touch your face, make sure your hands are clean. Cover your mouth with a tissue or your sleeve when coughing or sneezing. Try to avoid contact with people who are sick.

DHHS will provide additional information tomorrow.

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