



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

news release

Aug. 29, 2017

Public Health meningitis notifications completed

Public Health officials have completed direct notification of all individuals who may have come into close contact with a student who tested positive yesterday for bacterial meningitis.

Local medical providers have also been alerted, and medical practices have been notified of any patients in their practice who may need antibiotics to prevent the disease.

Humboldt County Health Officer Donald Baird said, "Although contagious by close or intimate contact, meningitis is not considered as contagious as other illnesses, such as influenza or the common cold."

The California Department of Public Health states that meningococcal disease can be spread by contact with oral secretions such as kissing an infected person or sharing toothbrushes or utensils.

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

"Up to 10 percent of normal, healthy individuals are asymptomatic carriers of the bacteria," Dr. Baird said. "How isolated cases occur in the community is unknown."

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