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FACT SHEET

Haemophilus Influenzae Type B (Hib) Disease

Haemophilus Influenza is not the same as an influenza virus. HIB is a bacteria that causes one of the most serious bacterial infections in young children. HIB may cause a variety of diseases such as meningitis (inflammation around the brain and spinal cord), bloodstream infections, pneumonia, and epiglottitis (inflammation of the upper airway), cellulitis, ear infections, septic arthritis, purulent pericarditis and other less common infections. It occurs mostly in infants and children under the age of five and can cause lifelong disability or death.

<http://www.cdc.gov/hi-disease/index.html>

Cause: *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib) bacteria.

Symptoms: Symptoms depend on the body site affected. Fever is present in all forms of HIB disease. Meningitis in addition causes stiff neck, headache, and vomiting. Pneumonia may cause a cough that produces mucus and rapid breathing. People with epiglottitis usually have noisy breathing and a very sore throat.

Spread: Person to person transmission by inhalation of respiratory tract droplets or by direct contact with respiratory secretions from a person who is a carrier or case patient. Individuals may carry HIB and potentially spread disease without becoming ill themselves.

Incubation: The period from exposure to onset of symptoms is unknown but probably less than a week.

Contagious Period: Unknown, probably short, 2-4 days.

Precautions: Adults: good hand washing especially after coughing, sneezing, preparing foods or eating

Reportable: By the provider or lab to the local or state health department.

Diagnosis and Treatment: Diagnosis may be made by isolation of organisms from blood or cerebrospinal fluid, pleural fluid (fluid around the lung/s) or pericardial fluid (fluid around the heart) or synovial fluid (fluid around a joint). Several intravenous antibiotics are available to treat serious infections along with other medical interventions. Rifampin (an oral antibiotic) is used to treat people who may carry the bacteria.

Prevention:

Children less than five years of age should be vaccinated against HIB. The HIB vaccine is now a part of routine childhood immunizations. Rifampin should be given to all household members of a person with HIB disease. Rifampin may be considered for staff and children of a day care center when an attending child becomes infected with HIB.