

Summary

- Seasonal increase of meningococcal disease - no outbreak identified
- Be aware of the presentation of meningococcal disease
- Maintain clinical vigilance for meningococcal disease

10 August 2017

Health Professional Advice: Meningococcal disease

Seasonal increase of meningococcal disease – no outbreak identified

Each year there is a seasonal increase of invasive meningococcal disease from *Neisseria meningitidis* in the Auckland region, typically observed in winter and early spring from June to September.

There were six cases of meningococcal disease notified over the past week, while a total of 12 cases have been notified since June this year. These numbers are within the expected range for this time of the year.

No links between cases have yet been identified, however, we are continuing to investigate and monitor the situation.

Be aware of the presentation of meningococcal disease

Meningococcal disease can initially present as flu-like symptoms. Illness can progress gradually over 1-2 days or rapidly over several hours.

Suspect meningococcal disease if:

- Rapid onset of symptoms
- Fever, usually >38°C
- Nausea, vomiting
- Headache, photophobia
- Neck pain or stiffness
- Confusion or reduced level of consciousness
- Myalgia or leg pain
- Cool peripheries
- Abnormal skin colour such as pallor or mottling
- Petechiae or purpuric rash

In infants, additional symptoms and signs can include:

- Poor feeding or not waking for feeds
- Irritability or a high pitched cry
- Bulging fontanelle, neck retraction with back arching

Maintain clinical vigilance for meningococcal disease

If you suspect meningococcal disease, follow your usual processes for a medical emergency.

If you have any clinical queries about possible meningococcal disease, contact your local hospital on-call service.

If you are a hospital clinician and suspect meningococcal disease, please notify ARPHS as soon as possible on (09) 623-4600.

For more information on meningococcal disease:

Ministry of Health <http://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/conditions-and-treatments/diseases-and-illnesses/meningococcal-disease-including-meningitis>

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