



Meningitis

Meningitis is an inflammation (swelling) of the protective membranes covering the brain and spinal cord.

Most cases of meningitis transmitted through the secretions of the respiratory system.

- The onset of symptoms is similar to influenza, and exacerbates during a short period.
- There is no cure for viruses, treatment is based on supplying the body with fluids.
- Vaccination is one of the most important ways to prevent the disease.

What are the types of meningitis?

Bacterial meningitis: Each age group is infected by different type of bacteria; it is contagious and life-threatening.

Viral meningitis: It is the most common type of meningitis, more common at the end of summer and early fall, and it is contagious and usually mild and quickly disappears.

Chronic meningitis: It spreads between people if it is bacterial.

Other types: fungal meningitis, parasitic meningitis and chemical meningitis.

What are the symptoms of meningitis?

- Sudden high fever.
- Stiff neck.
- Severe headache with nausea and vomiting.
- Skin rash.
- Seizures.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Sleepiness or difficulty waking.
- Sensitivity to light.



Newborns and infants may show these signs:

- High fever.
- Inactivity or sluggishness.
- A bulge in the soft spot-on top of a baby's head (fontanel).
- Stiffness in a baby's body and neck.
- Poor feeding.
- Frenzy and refusal to be hold by others.
- Constant crying.
- Seizures.
- Skin rash in some cases.

What are the modes of transmission of the disease?

- Sneezing.
- Coughing.
- Kissing.
- Sharing cups, toothbrushes, cigarettes and others.



Risk Factors:

- Skipping vaccinations.
- Age: Most cases of viral meningitis occur in children younger than age 5. Bacterial meningitis is common in those under age 20.
- Pregnancy.
- Weak immunity as a result of AIDS, diabetes or spleen removal and others.
- Travelling to infected areas like the African meningitis belt countries.
- Be in contact with infected persons.

Complications:

- Hearing loss.
- Memory and concentration difficulty.
- Learning disabilities.
- Gait problems.
- Seizures.
- Kidney problems.
- Death.



Diagnosis:

- Medical history.
- Clinical examination.
- Laboratory tests: blood culture, spinal tap (lumbar puncture).
- CT scan.

Treatment:

The treatment depends on the type of meningitis:

- Viral meningitis: It cannot be treated with antibiotics, usually disappears without medical intervention through resting, drinking fluids and using painkillers.
- Bacterial meningitis: It can be treated with intravenous antibiotics and steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, and drugs vary according to the type of bacteria.

Prevention:

- Vaccination against bacterial meningitis.
- Washing hands properly.
- Maintain good hygiene, don't share cups, toothbrushes and other things with anyone else.
- Improve your immune system by following healthy behaviors such as eating healthy diet and exercising regularly.
- When you need to sneeze, be sure to cover your mouth and nose.
- Provide preventive treatment for those coming from infected areas or have been in contact with meningitis patients.

