



Grant County Health District – Always Working for a Healthier and Safer Grant County

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TO: Grant County:
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Meningitis exposure at rave party near Vantage, Washington

GRANT COUNTY, WA – Public health staff are investigating a suspected case of meningitis in a 17 male from Seattle-King County who attended a *rave* party – “Operation APEX ‘09” on Saturday August 22, 2009 in the “Sand Hollow” area near Vantage. At this time he is hospitalized and in stable condition. Close contacts of the case are being identified and referred to their healthcare providers for preventive medication. **Anyone who attended the party should contact the Grant County Health District or see a healthcare provider immediately.**

This isolated case is not considered an outbreak, without further cases of meningitis found. At this time confirmatory lab results have not yet been available, recommendations may be modified pending the receipt of further test results.

Meningitis is a sudden illness, which can be caused by a bacterium or a virus that infects the bloodstream or the meninges, a thin lining covering the brain and spinal cord. The bacteria are carried in the nose and throat of many healthy adults and children. These individuals may not exhibit symptoms or illness, but they may be able to spread the infection to others.

Up to 12% of infections are fatal, even with appropriate antibiotic treatment; adolescent mortality approaches 25% nationwide. Complications from infection occur in as many as 20% of survivors and include hearing loss, neurologic disability, amputations of fingers, toes or limbs, and skin scarring.

Symptoms of meningitis include fever, cough, runny nose, intense headache, stiff neck, and rash. Please seek medical attention immediately if these symptoms are present.

The disease can be spread by direct and close contact with nasal or throat secretions of a carrier or ill person; it can be spread by sharing eating utensils, glassware, cigarettes, or toothbrushes, but can occur when people sleep near each other or share a household.

Meningococcal vaccine, which is available through a healthcare provider, protects against most types of meningococcal disease, but will not protect a person who has already been exposed to the disease. CDC recommends the following groups get meningococcal vaccine:

- **Children:** Certain high-risk children from ages 2 through 10.
- **Pre-teens/Adolescents:** Routinely recommended for all 11 through 18 year olds. If your child did not get this vaccine at the 11- or 12-year-old check-up, make an appointment for him or her to get it now.
- **Adults:** Vaccine is recommended for:
 - college freshman living in a dormitory
 - military recruit
 - those with a damaged spleen or your spleen has been removed
 - those who have terminal complement deficiency
 - microbiologist who is routinely exposed to *Neisseria meningitidis* (the causal pathogen)
 - those traveling to or residing in countries in which the disease is common

Please visit www.cdc.gov/meningitis/index.html for more information on the vaccine and disease.

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