

CDRS

Communicable Disease Reporting System

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE FACT SHEET **HAEMOPHILUS INFLUENZAE SEROTYPE B (HIB)**

Haemophilus influenzae type B is a bacterium that can cause a variety of different kinds of infections (ear infections, sinus infections, pneumonia, blood stream infections, and infections of the covering of the spinal cord and brain). Hib disease can occur in any age group.

Symptoms

- In the United States and other industrialized countries, more than one-half of *Haemophilus influenzae* serotype b (Hib) cases present as meningitis with fever, headache, fatigue, and stiff neck.
- It is also frequently associated with ear infections.
- The remainder of infections present as a serious skin infection in the cheeks or near the eyes, epiglottitis (a swelling of the throat that is life threatening), arthritis, or infection of the blood.
- In developing countries, Hib is the second leading cause of bacterial pneumonia deaths in children as well.
- This bacteria, however, does NOT cause influenza, even though the name suggests that it does

Transmission

- Transmission occurs from an infected person by means of respiratory droplets (sneezing or coughing) or through direct contact with respiratory secretions (a used Kleenex tissue, sharing cups or utensils).

Treatment

- Infections caused by Hib are very serious and usually require hospitalization. Patients will receive antibiotics through an IV.
- Hospitalized patients will be placed in respiratory isolation for the first day so that there is no spread between patients.

Prevention

- Fortunately, there is a vaccine available against Hib that will prevent children from getting invasive disease.
- Children should receive a total of 4 doses of this vaccine at the following ages: 2 months old, 4 months old, 6 months old, and the last between 12 and 15 months of age.
- Another important part of prevention is making sure that you practice good hygiene. This includes good handwashing skills, as well as using disposable tissues and towels and proper disinfections of cups, glasses, eating utensils, water bottles, etc.
- In households with unimmunized children <48 months of age other than the ill child, all persons including adult caregivers should receive medication to prevent infection.
- Medication is not indicated if all contacts are older than 4 years of age.

**All information is general in nature and is not intended
to be used as a substitute for appropriate professional advice.**

Franklin County



Board of Health

Report Disease With Ease - 24 hours a day

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Columbus and Franklin County Communicable Disease Reporting System

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