



# UPDATE

**From:** Crook County Health Department  
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**Re:** Meningococcal Update

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Crook County Health Department continues to work with the State of Oregon, CDC, health care providers, St. Charles Health System and Deschutes and Jefferson counties to protect the public and keep it informed. The Health Department will continue to provide vaccinations for the next two months until the Centers for Disease Control and the State of Oregon along with our department determine we are no longer in outbreak status. There have been no further cases and we have provided 1000,s of vaccinations to the public.

## **What is Meningococcal disease?**

Meningococcal disease is caused by bacteria that are present in the throats or noses of about 10 percent of the population. It is **not** highly contagious. It is a rare, but serious illness. The main symptoms of meningococcal meningitis are high fever, headache, rash, vomiting and a stiff neck.

## **When should I be seen by a healthcare provider?**

If you or your child has symptoms of fever greater than 102 degrees with associated headache, neck stiffness or nausea, these may be symptoms of meningococcal infection and it is recommended you contact your local healthcare provider or emergency room for evaluation.

## **How can I lower my risk of infection?**

Meningococcus is difficult to spread. It takes at least four hours of face-to-face contact or direct contact with nasal discharge or oral secretions (saliva) to be passed from person to person. However, there are simple ways to lower the risk of infection, which include:

- Washing your hands.
- Not sharing cigarettes or eating utensils, and not drinking from the same bottle, cup or straw as others.

**Who should get a vaccination?**

We encourage parents to have their children ages 11 to 18 years old receive the meningococcal vaccine, as recommended by Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) guidelines. During this outbreak status, we will continue to provide vaccinations to those in Crook County who fall between 9 months of age through 25 years of age.

**What are my local hospitals doing in response to these cases?**

Pioneer Memorial Hospital and St. Charles Redmond are working closely with Crook County Public Health to track these cases. Emergency Rooms at both hospitals will continue to evaluate and treat patients as usual.