

May 10, 2016

To the Rutgers University-New Brunswick Community,

This message is to provide additional information regarding the two Rutgers University-New Brunswick students with bacterial meningitis.

Laboratory tests indicate that both students had infections caused by *Neisseria meningitidis* serogroup (type) B (MenB). Special testing that was performed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) show that the bacteria from the two cases are genetically identical (a match) even though no common link was found between the two cases. This suggests that the strain is present on the Rutgers University-New Brunswick campus.

Although there have been only two cases, public health officials are concerned that this may represent an outbreak since the 2 cases have occurred over a relatively short period of time. Of course, we cannot predict whether there will be additional cases of MenB associated with Rutgers University-New Brunswick.

Vaccination is the best protection against meningococcal disease. However, the vaccine routinely given to protect against meningococcal disease protects against four serogroups: A, C, W, and Y. This vaccine does not provide protection against MenB disease.

There are currently 2 licensed vaccines that protect against MenB, Bexsero® and Trumenba®. These safe and effective vaccines may be given to provide protection against most strains of MenB disease. As a precaution, you should contact your healthcare provider or Rutgers Student Health to discuss your options for vaccination against MenB. More information about MenB vaccines can be found at: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/mening/faqs-hcp-adolescent-vaccine.html>

The New Jersey Department of Health, local health officials, Rutgers Student Health, and the CDC are working together to develop public health recommendations, including vaccination, to protect the Rutgers University community.

There are no recommendations or plans to cancel any activities or scheduled events on the Rutgers University campus.

Members of the University community who experience symptoms or have health concerns may visit their health care provider. Students may visit Rutgers Student Health (848-932-7402) Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., at Hurtado Health Center, Busch Livingston Health Center and Cook Douglass Health Center (<http://rhsmedical.rutgers.edu/locations/hours-of-operation/>).

Beginning June 1, summer Health Center hours are at Hurtado Health Center only, Monday – Friday from 8:30 - 4:30pm. For medical advice when the health centers are not open, students can call the Advice Nurse Line: 1-800-890-5882. Faculty and staff at Rutgers University-New Brunswick who have additional questions or concerns can contact the Occupational Health Department at 848-932-8254. In case of an emergency, call 911. It is extremely important that anyone with symptoms of meningococcal disease (e.g., rash, headache, stiff neck, fever) get evaluated as soon as possible. While meningococcal disease is treatable with antibiotics, treatment must be started quickly.

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In addition, to help prevent the spread of the disease, Rutgers Student Health is encouraging members of the University community to pay increased attention to personal hygiene practices such as good handwashing, covering coughs, and avoiding sharing anything that comes into contact with the mouth (water bottles, eating utensils, cosmetics/lip balm, cigarettes, etc.).

Rutgers University is closely monitoring the situation in conjunction with state, regional and local public health officials and will continue to provide updates as necessary.

Sincerely,
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