

Dear Campus Community,

This message is to alert members of the University community that a student at Rutgers University-New Brunswick has been diagnosed with bacterial meningitis caused by *Neisseria meningitidis* (meningococcus).

The student, who was hospitalized on April 29, 2016, is receiving treatment and is recovering. Rutgers Student Health is coordinating its response with local, regional and state health officials. Those who had close contact with the student are being notified so they can receive antibiotics as a preventative measure.

Special testing is being requested to determine the specific type (strain) of meningococcal bacteria causing the infection in this student. In March 2016, the University community was notified of a student hospitalized on March 18 with serogroup B meningococcal disease (MenB). Public health officials are conducting an investigation to determine if these cases might be linked.

Meningococcus can cause severe illnesses that may include infections of the lining of the brain and spinal cord (meningitis) and bloodstream infections (bacteremia or septicemia). Once diagnosed, meningococcal disease is treatable with antibiotics, but quick medical attention is extremely important. Signs and symptoms of meningococcal disease could include high fever, headache, stiff neck and a rash. These symptoms can develop over several hours, or they may take one to two days. If you feel ill you should seek the care of a medical provider. Let your provider know about the recent case of meningitis on 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 Monday through Friday, 8:30 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/>). Faculty and staff with questions or concerns may contact Occupational Health 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.

More information about meningococcal disease is available on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website (www.cdc.gov/meningococcal/), at the New Jersey Department of Health website (nj.gov/health/cd/meningo/geneinfo.shtml) and on the Rutgers Student Health website (<http://rhsmedical.rutgers.edu/>).

The bacteria that cause meningococcal disease are not as contagious as the common cold or the flu, and they are not spread by casual contact or by simply breathing the air where a person with the disease has been. Meningococcal disease is generally transmitted through direct exchange of respiratory and throat secretions by close personal contact, such as coughing, sharing drinks, kissing and being in close proximity for an extended period of time.

Rutgers Student Health is encouraging members of the university community to pay increased attention to personal hygienic practices such as good hand washing, covering coughs and avoiding sharing drinks or utensils with others.

We will provide additional information and recommendations as they become available.

Sincerely,
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