

What treatment is available?

A person with Hib Bacterial Meningitis is usually admitted to hospital and treated with antibiotics. The most commonly used antibiotic to prevent Hib is called Rifampicin.

What about school or work?

An infected person may only return to preschool/school or work if the doctor considers the person is well and non-infectious, after treatment with appropriate antibiotics.

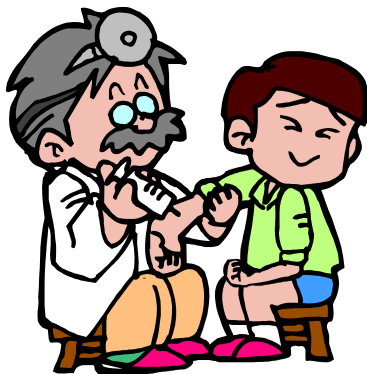
Vaccination Schedule

Hib vaccine is included in the New Zealand Childhood Immunisation Schedule and is free to all children under the age of 5 years.

Hib vaccine can be given at the same time as other vaccinations.

Children in New Zealand are immunised at:

- 6 weeks
- 3 months
- 5 months
- 15 months



Other resources available on childhood illnesses:

- Rotavirus
- Impetigo
- Hand, foot and mouth disease
- Ringworm
- Slapped cheek disease
- Conjunctivitis
- Threadworms

COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC HEALTH

Christchurch Office
310 Manchester Street
P.O Box 1475
Christchurch
Phone: 03 364 7844
Facsimile: 03 379 6125
Email: chic@cdhb.health.nz

West Coast Office
3 Tarapuhi Street
P.O Box 443
Greymouth
Phone: 03 768 1160
Facsimile: 03 768 1169
Email: westcoast.chic@cdhb.health.nz

Ashburton Office
Elizabeth Street
P.O Box 110
Ashburton
Phone: 03 307 6902
Facsimile: 03 307 8081
Email: ashburton.chic@cdhb.health.nz

Timaru Office
18 Woollcombe Street
P.O Box 510
Timaru
Phone: 03 687 2600
Facsimile: 03 688 6091
Email: timaru.chic@cdhb.health.nz

www.cph.co.nz

Communicable Diseases
Community and Public Health
(a division of the Canterbury District Health Board)

October 2011

Code/Reference: MED0177

Authorised By: Resource Approval Panel

Haemophilus Influenzae (Hib)



Canterbury

District Health Board

Te Poari Hauora ō Waitaha

What is Hib Disease?

Hib stands for *Haemophilus Influenza type b*. This is a serious disease caused by a bacteria. While this is largely prevented by routine immunisation, occasional cases may still occur.

Before the introduction of Hib vaccine, Hib was the leading cause of bacterial Meningitis among children under five. Meningitis is an infection of the lining covering the brain. Despite its name, it is not related to influenza ("the flu").

How is the illness spread?

The bacteria is spread from person to person by inhaling droplets of respiratory secretions e.g. when a person coughs or sneezes.

The bacteria can live in the back of the persons nose or throat and they may not get sick. However, sometimes the germs spread into the lungs or the bloodstream and cause serious illness.

How long until symptoms appear?

The incubation period (time between when you contract the infection and get sick) is thought to be around 2-4 days.

Duration of the illness depends on early identification and commencement of effective treatment.

If you suspect symptoms, seek medical

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms in adults and children may include:

- Fever
- Loss of appetite
- Vomiting
- Lethargy
- Stiff neck and back
- Bulging fontanelle (soft part of head in infants)
- Younger children & infants may also have a high pitched cry

Infection with this bacteria can also cause:

- Epiglottitis (internal swelling of the throat which can obstruct breathing)
- Pneumonia (lung infection)
- Septic arthritis (joint infection)
- Infection of the tissues under the skin (Cellulitis)
- Infection in the lining of the heart (Pericarditis)
- Infection of the bone (Osteomyelitis)

NOTE: both Meningitis and Epiglottitis can develop quickly and if left untreated, can rapidly cause death.

How long is it infectious?

A person is infectious as long as the bacteria are present in the nose and throat. After approximately 24 hours of antibiotic treatment the person is no longer considered infectious.

Who is at risk of contracting Hib?

Children under 5 are most at risk of catching this disease.

With the introduction of an effective Hib vaccine, the likelihood of vaccinated children acquiring the disease is low.

However, this disease does still exist in the community so unvaccinated children may still be at risk.

Your child can get Hib by being around other children or adults who may have the bacteria and not know it.

Exposure factors include:

- Household overcrowding
- Child care centres
- School aged siblings

How can I prevent spread?

- Limit close physical contact when coughing and sneezing
- Remember to cover your mouth and wash your hands thoroughly after coughing and sneezing
- Do not share food, drinks and eating utensils.



DON'T SHARE SPIT!