

# Meningitis

## **What is Meningitis?**

Meningitis is a bacterial infection that is relatively rare but it can be deadly. Meningitis is spread through air droplets and direct contact with someone who is infected.

## **What are the symptoms?**

- High fever
- Headache
- Stiff neck
- Vomiting
- Rash

## **How soon do the symptoms appear?**

- 2 – 10 days after exposure, but usually within 5 days

## **When and how long is an infected person able to spread the disease?**

- From the time a person is first infected until the germ is no longer present in discharges from nose and throat, he/she may transmit the disease

## **What can I do to prevent infection?**

- No drinking or eating after anyone
- Wash hands with soap and water
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue when you sneeze or cough
- Place used tissue in waste basket
- Get help if you have symptoms
- Get immunized if living on campus or in group situation

## **What is the treatment for meningitis?**

- Penicillin is the drug of choice
- Casual contact such as in a regular classroom or work is not usually significant enough to cause concern
- If you think you or someone you know has meningitis go the emergency room for care right away

## **Is there a vaccine to prevent meningococcal meningitis?**

- There is a vaccine. Consider the risk of the disease and make the decision about receiving vaccination

## **Who should be get vaccinated?**

- College students living in dormitories
- Anyone who has a damaged spleen, or whose spleen has been removed
- Anyone who has an immune system disorder
- People who might have been exposed to meningitis during an outbreak

**What are the contraindications to the vaccine?**

- Severe allergic reaction to vaccine component or following prior dose of vaccine
- Moderate or severe acute illness

**Where can I get the vaccination?**

- The vaccine is available in the UWF Student Health Center located in Building 63
- You can also contact your personal physician

**The vaccine is recommended for all students. Immunity lasts 5 years.**