

## ***MENINGOCOCCAL DISEASE***

*(Neisseria meningitidis)*

Last revised May 11, 2011

### **I. IDENTIFICATION**

- A. **CLINICAL DESCRIPTION:** A very serious, acute disease caused by infection with the bacterium *Neisseria meningitidis*. This bacterium is often associated with meningitis and/or sepsis. Signs and symptoms include: sudden onset of fever, intense headache, stiff or rigid neck, photophobia, petechial or purpuric rash, nausea and vomiting.
- B. **REPORTING CRITERIA:** Clinical diagnosis or laboratory confirmation.
- C. **LABORATORY CRITERIA FOR CONFIRMATION:**  
At least one of the following:
- Isolation of *Neisseria meningitidis* from a normally sterile site (e.g., cerebrospinal fluid [CSF], blood, joint, pleural, pericardial fluid, or another normally sterile site). Isolation from urine, sputum, abscesses or pharyngeal swabs does not meet the case definition.
  - Visualization of Gram-negative diplococci on Gram stain of CSF or blood.
  - Molecular detection of *N. meningitidis* by polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test, performed on CSF only.
  - Positive antigen test for *N. meningitidis* performed on CSF only.
- D. **WISCONSIN CASE DEFINITION:** A clinically compatible illness that is laboratory confirmed.

### **II. ACTIONS REQUIRED / PREVENTION MEASURES**

- A. **WISCONSIN DISEASE SURVEILLANCE CATEGORY I:** Report **IMMEDIATELY BY TELEPHONE** to the patient's local health department upon identification of a confirmed or suspected case. The local health department shall then notify the state epidemiologist **immediately** of any confirmed or suspected cases. Within 24 hours, submit a case report electronically through the Wisconsin Electronic Disease Surveillance System (WEDSS), by mail or fax using an Acute and Communicable Disease Case Report ([F-44151](#)), or by other means.
- B. **EPIDEMIOLOGY REPORTS REQUIRED:**
- *Electronically* – Report through WEDSS, including appropriate disease-specific tabs  
OR
  - *Paper Copy* – Acute and Communicable Diseases Case Report ([F-44151](#)) along with:
    - [Vaccine History and Serogroup Worksheet](#)
- C. **PUBLIC HEALTH INTERVENTIONS:**  
In accordance with Wisconsin Administrative rule DHS 145.05, local public health should follow the methods of control recommended in the current edition of *Control of Communicable Diseases Manual*, edited by David L. Heymann, published by the American Public Health Association.

Protocol for Disease Management and Investigation of Contacts

For further details regarding control measures, refer to the [Invasive Meningococcal Disease Management Protocol](#).

**III. CONTACTS FOR CONSULTATION**

- A. LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT – REGIONAL OFFICES – TRIBAL AGENCIES:  
<http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/localhealth/index.htm>
- B. BCDER / COMMUNICABLE DISEASE EPIDEMIOLOGY SECTION: (608) 267-9003
- C. WISCONSIN STATE LABORATORY OF HYGIENE / BACTERIOLOGY: (608) 263-3421

**IV. RELATED REFERENCES**

- Heymann DL, ed. Meningococcal infection. In: *Control of Communicable Diseases Manual*. 19th ed. Washington, DC: American Public Health Association, 2008:415-421.
- Pickering LK, ed. Meningococcal infections. In: *Red Book: 2009 Report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases*. 28th ed. Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics, 2009:455-463.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Meningococcal disease. In: Atkinson W, Wolfe S, Hamborsky J, McIntyre L, eds. *Epidemiology and Prevention of Vaccine-Preventable Diseases*. 11th ed. Washington, DC: Public Health Foundation, 2009:177-187.