



Communicable Disease Case Reporting and Investigation Protocol
BACTERIAL MENINGITIS
(Non-meningococcal, non-*Haemophilus influenzae*)

I. IDENTIFICATION AND DEFINITION OF CASES

- A. **Clinical Description:** A group of diseases characterized by infection of the meninges (the tissue and fluid that cover the brain and spinal cord) caused by a bacterium **other than** *Neisseria meningitidis*, *Haemophilus influenzae*, *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, Groups A or B Streptococcus, or *Listeria monocytogenes*. Some examples of other organisms that can cause bacterial meningitis are: *Escherichia coli*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, and other Streptococcal and *Klebsiella* species. Signs and symptoms of meningitis may include: sudden onset of fever, intense headache, stiff or rigid neck, photophobia, nausea, and vomiting.
- B. **Laboratory Criteria:** Isolation of a bacterial pathogen from cerebrospinal fluid (CSF).
- C. **Wisconsin Surveillance Case Definition: Confirmed**—A clinically compatible illness that is laboratory confirmed.

II. REPORTING

- A. **Wisconsin Disease Surveillance Category II – Methods for Reporting:** This disease shall be reported to the patient’s local health officer or to the local health officer’s designee within 72 hours of recognition of a case or suspected case, per Wis. Admin. Code § [DHS 145.04 \(3\) \(b\)](#). Report electronically through the Wisconsin Electronic Disease Surveillance System (WEDSS), or mail or fax a completed Acute and Communicable Disease Case Report ([F-44151](#)) to the address on the form.
- B. **Responsibility for Reporting:** According to Wis. Admin. Code § [DHS 145.04\(1\)](#), persons licensed under Wis. Stat. ch. [441](#) or [448](#), laboratories, health care facilities, teachers, principals, or nurses serving a school or day care center, and any person who knows or suspects that a person has a communicable disease identified in [Appendix A](#).
- C. **Clinical Criteria for Reporting:** Clinically compatible illness.
- D. **Laboratory Criteria for Reporting:** Isolation of a bacterial pathogen from cerebrospinal fluid (CSF).

III. CASE INVESTIGATION

- A. **Responsibility for case investigation:** It is the responsibility of the local health department (LHD) to investigate or arrange for investigation of suspected or confirmed cases as soon as is reasonably possible. A case investigation may include information collected by phone, in person, in writing, or through review of medical records or communicable disease report forms, as necessary and appropriate.
- B. **Required Documentation:**
1. Complete the WEDSS disease incident investigation report, including appropriate, disease-specific tabs (e.g., WEDSS Lab Clinical Tab, “Invasive bacteria - Specimen summary” section).
 2. Upon completion of investigation, set WEDSS disease incident process status to “Final.”
- C. **Additional Investigation Responsibilities**
1. Determine whether the case is potentially outbreak-related and notify the Wisconsin Division of Public Health (DPH), Bureau of Communicable Diseases (BCD).

IV. PUBLIC HEALTH INTERVENTIONS AND PREVENTION MEASURES

- A. In accordance with Wis. Admin. Code § [DHS 145.05](#), local public health agencies should follow the methods of control recommended in the current editions of *Control of Communicable Diseases Manual*, edited by David L. Heymann, published by the American Public Health Association, and the American Academy of Pediatrics’ *Red Book: Report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases*, unless otherwise specified by the state epidemiologist.

V. CONTACTS FOR CONSULTATION

- A. Local health departments and tribal health agencies: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/lh-depts/index.htm>
- B. Bureau of Communicable Diseases, Communicable Diseases Epidemiology Section: 608-267-9003
- C. Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene: 1-800-862-1013

VI. RELATED REFERENCES

- A. Heymann DL, ed. Bacterial meningitis. In: *Control of Communicable Diseases Manual*. 20th ed. Washington, DC: American Public Health Association, 2015: 401-413.
- B. Pickering LK, ed. Bacterial meningitis. In: *Red Book: 2015 Report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases*. 30th ed. Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics, 2015: See relevant causative pathogen.
- C. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Meningitis website: <https://www.cdc.gov/meningitis/bacterial.html>
- D. Division of Public Health Meningitis website: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/invasive-bacteria/meningitisviralbacterial.htm>