

Diseases Fact Sheet - Haemophilus Influenzae Type B

South Dakota Department of Health

Office of Disease Prevention Services - 605-773-3737 -(1-800-592-1861 in South Dakota only)

This material is provided for informational purposes only and is not a substitute for medical care. We are not able to answer personal medical questions. Please see your health care provider concerning appropriate care, treatment or other medical advice.

What is it?

Hib is one of the most important causes of serious bacterial infection in young children. Hib may cause a variety of diseases such as meningitis (inflammation of the coverings of the spinal column and brain), blood stream infections, pneumonia, arthritis and infections of other parts of the body.

Who gets Hib disease?

Hib disease is most common in children three months to three years of age.

How is Hib disease spread?

Hib disease may be transmitted through contact with mucus or droplets from the nose and throat of an infected person.

What are the symptoms of Hib disease?

Symptoms may include fever, nausea and vomiting. Other symptoms depend upon the part of the body affected.

How soon do symptoms appear?

The incubation period for Hib disease is usually less than 10 days.

When and for how long is a person able to spread Hib disease?

The contagious period varies and, unless treated, may persist for as long as the organism is present in the nose and throat, even after symptoms have disappeared.

Does past infection with Hib disease make a person immune?

No. Children who have had Hib disease are at risk of recurrence.

What is the treatment for Hib disease?



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Antibiotics such as penicillin are generally used to treat serious infections. Rifampin is used to treat people who may be carrying the germ.

What are the possible complications associated with Hib disease?

Hib disease manifests itself in a variety of ways, most commonly meningitis. When Hib meningitis occurs, a certain proportion of those who recover may suffer long-lasting neurologic problems. In some instances, cases may be fatal.

What can be done to prevent the spread of Hib disease?

There are several types of Hib conjugate vaccines currently in use. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommend that Hib conjugate vaccine be given to all children beginning in infancy at two months. After primary infant immunization, any licensed Hib conjugate vaccine may be used as a booster dose at age 12-15 months.

[Learn About Immunizations in South Dakota](#)

Related Sites:

- [South Dakota Department of Health, Immunization Program](#)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
 - [Vaccines and Immunizations](#)
 - [Parents Guide to Childhood Immunizations](#)