



HAEMOPHILUS INFLUENZAE, INVASIVE DISEASE FACT SHEET

WHAT IS HAEMOPHILUS INFLUENZAE?

Haemophilus influenza is a type of bacteria that can cause many different kinds of infections. These infections range from mild ear infections to severe diseases, like bloodstream infections. The most common types of invasive disease caused by H. influenza are:

- Pneumonia (lung infection)
- Bloodstream (bloodstream infection)
- Meningitis (infection of the tissue covering the brain and spinal cord)
- Epiglottitis (swelling in the throat)
- Cellulitis (skin infection)
- Infectious arthritis (inflammation of the joint)

H. influenzae disease occurs mostly in babies and children younger than five years old. Adults 65 years or older, American Indians, and Alaska Natives are also at increased risk for getting sick with invasive H. influenzae disease.

HOW DO YOU GET HAEMOPHILUS INFLUENZAE?

These bacteria live in the nose and throat, and usually cause no harm. However, the bacteria can sometimes move to other parts of the body and cause infection. H. influenzae is spread person-to-person through respiratory droplets when someone who has the bacteria in their nose or throat coughs or sneezes.

SYMPTOMS

Haemophilus influenzae disease causes different symptoms depending on which part of the body is affected. After exposure, it is estimated that symptoms appear within a few days.

TREATMENT

H. influenzae is treated with antibiotics. Discuss treatment options with your doctor.

PREVENTION

- There's a vaccine that can prevent Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib) disease, the most common type ("strain") of Haemophilus influenzae bacteria. Hib vaccine is recommended for all children younger than 5 years old in the United States and is usually given to babies starting at 2 months old
- In certain cases, people in close contact with someone who is sick with Hib should receive antibiotics to prevent them from getting the disease.

DGHD EFFORTS

The Delaware General Health District (DGHD) offers the Hib vaccine. Please call (740) 203-2040 to determine if you need the vaccine and to schedule an appointment. Reports of suspected and confirmed cases of disease are made to the DGHD. The DGHD investigates potential sources of illness, conducts surveillance for the spread of disease, and engages in community outreach and education.