

# MENINGITIS

**Meningitis** is an infection of the membranes and fluid that surround your brain and spinal cord. It can be caused by bacteria or viruses. With early diagnosis and prompt treatment, most people recover from meningitis.

**Bacterial Meningitis** is usually much more serious. It can lead to brain damage, hearing loss, or learning disabilities. Some forms of bacterial meningitis are contagious. The bacteria is spread through coughing, sneezing, kissing, or sharing items such as eating utensils or tooth brushes with an infected person.

**Viral Meningitis** can be caused by common intestinal viruses and viruses associated with mumps, or herpes infection. People can get viral meningitis from drinking polluted water. It is usually mild and often clears up within one to two weeks.

## SYMPTOMS

Early symptoms can sometimes be mistaken for the Flu.

- Fever
- Severe headache
- Stiff neck
- Drowsiness or confusion
- Nausea and vomiting
- Sensitivity to light

See your doctor for above symptoms. Your

doctor can diagnose Meningitis by doing a spinal tap, in which he or she inserts a needle into your lower back to remove spinal fluid. The fluid can then be tested for bacteria or viruses.

## TREATMENT

**Viral Meningitis** requires bed rest, fluids, and over the counter medication to relieve fever and headache.

**Bacterial Meningitis** requires antibiotics and should be treated immediately to prevent serious complications.

## PREVENTION

You can reduce your risk of getting Meningitis by washing your hands often, to prevent the spread of viruses or bacteria. Boost your immune system by eating well, exercising, and getting plenty of rest.

There are a number of vaccines available to protect against the different types of Meningitis. Talk to your doctor about the vaccinations. College students who live in dormitories are recommended to be vaccinated and also people traveling to countries where Meningitis is common.

*"He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities and by his stripes we are healed "*  
*Is.53:5.*