

Your child may have been exposed to:

Viral Meningitis

Viral meningitis affects the thin lining covering the brain and spinal cord. It is usually caused by enteroviruses.

If you think your child has Viral Meningitis:

- Tell your childcare provider or call the school.
- **Need to stay home?**

Childcare:

Yes, until fever and/or diarrhea is gone and your child is healthy enough for routine activities.

School:

No, if the child is healthy enough to participate in routine activities.

Symptoms

Your child may be unusually tired and suddenly have a fever, headache, stiff neck and/or rash. Other symptoms may be sore throat, diarrhea, and vomiting.

It is hard to tell if babies have viral meningitis. Babies with the virus may have a fever. They may also be fussy, refuse to eat, or be difficult to wake.

If your child is infected, it may take from 2 to 21 days for symptoms to start. It usually takes 7 days.

Spread

- By sneezing or coughing.
- By touching contaminated hands, surfaces or objects. Stool from infected people can also carry the germs.

Contagious Period

For 3 days before until 10 days after symptoms start. Virus may be in the stool for several weeks.

Call your Healthcare Provider

- ◆ If anyone in your home has symptoms. Your doctor may want to test for the virus.

Prevention

- Cover nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing. Use a tissue or your sleeve. Dispose of used tissues.
- Wash hands after touching anything that could be contaminated with the secretions from the mouth or nose or with stool. Your child may need help with handwashing.
- DO NOT share drink containers and cups or silverware. Wash all dishes with hot soapy water between uses.
- Clean and disinfect anything that comes in contact with secretions from the nose or mouth or with stool. This includes toilets (potty chairs), sinks, toys, and diaper changing areas. Use a product that kills germs.

For more information, call Saint Paul - Ramsey County Department of Public Health at 651-266-1277.