

## Health Information: Viral Meningitis

Carson City Health and Human Services (CCHHS) is reporting two (2) cases of viral meningitis for week 43 in the Carson City, Douglas County, or Lyon County areas. Due to the concern that has been raised by increases in viral meningitis in neighboring areas, CCHHS is providing general information about viral meningitis to the healthcare and school communities.

### Viral Meningitis Overview

Viral meningitis is an inflammation of the tissue that covers the brain and spinal cord that is caused by a virus. Viral meningitis is typically less severe than bacterial meningitis, and most people recover on their own within 7-10 days. Viral meningitis cannot be treated by antibiotics, and there is no need for contacts of cases to receive preventative antibiotics. Although clusters of cases of viral meningitis are not common, they do occur and CCHHS is communicating regularly with our neighboring areas and monitoring the health of residents closely.

### Viral Meningitis Symptoms

Symptoms of viral meningitis include:

- Fever
- Headache
- Sensitivity to light
- Some people may also have a rash, sore throat, diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting
- Stiff neck
- Fatigue

There are no vaccines to protect against the most common causes of viral meningitis, but the following steps can help lower the risk of getting infected or spreading the infection to other people.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after using the toilet, changing diapers, or coughing and/or blowing your nose.
- Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with tissue or your upper shirt sleeve, not your hands.
- Avoid close contact such as kissing, hugging, or sharing cups or eating utensils with people who are sick.
- Clean and disinfect potentially contaminated items and surfaces with diluted bleach (1/4 cup of bleach in 1 gallon of water).
- Stay home when you are sick.

Persons feeling unwell with symptoms of meningitis are urged to seek medical attention to rule out bacterial meningitis.

Strict isolation of persons with viral meningitis is not required, however people diagnosed with viral meningitis should not return to school or work until their symptoms are gone. If you are sick, stay home as this is the best way to not spread any illness.

The recommendations to prevent the spread of viral meningitis are good recommendations in the prevention of other health concerns such as influenza (the flu) and hepatitis A; both of which have been recent health concerns in our community and surrounding areas respectively.

### Additional Information

For additional information go to: <https://www.cdc.gov/meningitis/viral.html>