



# KALAMAZOO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

In the Pursuit of Extraordinary Governance...

## FACT SHEET VIRAL MENINGITIS

(Aseptic meningitis, Nonbacterial meningitis)

<b><i>What is viral meningitis?</i></b>	Viral meningitis is an infection that causes swelling of the tissues around the brain and spinal cord. Many viruses can cause meningitis, but the most common ones are called enteroviruses. Viral meningitis is fairly common, rarely serious, and recovery is usually complete.
<b><i>How is it spread?</i></b>	It depends on which virus is causing infection, but it is usually by direct contact, including respiratory droplets from the nose and throat. This means if someone that is infected coughs or sneezes on another person, they may infect that person. <b>Infection usually does not even cause a noticeable illness. It is very rare to have an infection that results in meningitis.</b>
<b><i>What are the early signs?</i></b>	Early signs of meningitis vary, depending on the type of virus, but may include sudden fever, intense headache, nausea and vomiting, and stiff neck. Symptoms like vomiting, diarrhea, coughing, and sneezing may be associated with infection with enteroviruses.
<b><i>What about contacts?</i></b>	Contacts should not be excluded if they don't have symptoms. If symptoms do appear, parents should check with their family doctor. People with a depressed immune system should also talk to their doctor.
<b><i>How long is it contagious?</i></b>	It depends on the specific virus causing disease; however, most people already have the viruses in their body, and most of them do not get meningitis.
<b><i>When is it OK to return to daycare/school?</i></b>	It is okay to return to school when recovered, with a doctor's okay.
<b><i>What else is important to know?</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Encourage children to practice good handwashing and other hygiene measures such as covering their mouths when coughing or sneezing.</li><li>• Disinfection: no precautions are needed beyond routine sanitary practices.</li></ul>

*This fact sheet is not intended to replace the advice of your physician. Parents should contact their healthcare provider if they have concerns regarding their child's health. If you have general questions, you may contact a Kalamazoo County nurse at 373-5022 or 373-5267.*

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