

Questions and Answers continued

- Q2** You won't get it if you've had a meningitis vaccine. **True/False?**
- A2** **False.** Meningitis vaccines give excellent protection, but can't prevent all forms. You still need to know the symptoms. For more information call the charity's **Freephone** 24 hour helpline 080 8800 3344 (UK) 1800 41 33 44 (Republic of Ireland) or visit our website www.meningitis.org
- Q3** If you feel ill, you should wait and see if you get a rash. **True/False?**
- A3** **False.** The rash is mostly seen with septicaemia, but it might not appear until someone is already very ill, and in some cases may not appear at all.
- Q4** You always get a stiff neck, and can't stand the light. **True/False?**
- A4** **False.** Neck stiffness and dislike of bright lights are symptoms of meningitis but do not appear in every case and are unusual in young children. They are **not symptoms of septicaemia** - the more dangerous form.
- Q5** With meningitis and septicaemia you always get ill quickly. **True/False?**
- A5** **False.** The main type of meningitis and septicaemia usually comes on very fast and the person will get worse very quickly. However, there are some types where the onset of illness is slower.

Trust your instincts. If you are worried about someone who is ill, get medical help immediately.

For more information call
Meningitis Research Foundation's
Freephone 24 hour helpline



080 8800 3344 (UK)

1800 41 33 44 (Republic of Ireland)

or visit our website www.meningitis.org

Spot Meningitis Symptoms - life saving information available by text in the UK, simply text **MRF to 82088**.

This text will be a standard rate text. MRF will not charge you for the video but data charges from your operator will apply.

Our vision is a world free from meningitis and septicaemia. That's why we fund vital scientific research into the prevention, detection and treatment of the diseases.

We raise awareness of the symptoms and the need for urgent medical help by campaigns and leaflets like these, and provide resources for health professionals. We also offer written and audio information in 22 languages, details of which are on our website. Information is provided free of charge. We also support people affected by meningitis and septicaemia through our **Freephone** 24 hour helpline and other support services.

If you would like to help in the fight against meningitis and septicaemia, please call your local office. Thank you.

Meningitis Research Foundation:

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Offices: Belfast, Bristol, Dublin, Edinburgh. A charity registered in England and Wales no 1091105, in Scotland no SC037586 & in Ireland CHY 12030.

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Race Against Time

Meningitis and septicaemia can kill in hours - Know the Symptoms



Know the Symptoms Please keep this for reference

- Meningitis and septicaemia can be hard to recognise at first. Symptoms can appear in any order, but the first symptoms are usually fever, vomiting, headache and feeling unwell, just like many mild illnesses. The **'red flag' symptoms** often appear earlier than meningitis symptoms like neck stiffness and dislike of light, and before the more **serious symptoms**.
- Not everyone gets all of these symptoms.
- Septicaemia can occur with or without meningitis.

	Septicaemia	Meningitis
Fever and/or vomiting 	●	●
Severe headache 	●	●
Limb/joint/muscle pain <small>(sometimes stomach pain/diarrhoea)</small> 	▶	
Cold hands and feet/shivering 	▶	
Pale or mottled skin 	▶	
Breathing fast/breathless 	●	
Rash <small>(anywhere on the body)</small> 	●	● <small>Not present in all cases</small>
Stiff neck 		● <small>Less common in young children</small>
Dislike of bright lights 		● <small>Less common in young children</small>
Very sleepy/vacant/difficult to wake 	●	●
Confused/delirious 	●	●
Seizures (fits) may also be seen 		●

Know the Symptoms

Please keep this for reference

Other symptoms in babies:

- Tense or bulging soft spot on their head
- Refusing to feed
- Irritable when picked up, with a high pitched or moaning cry
- A stiff body with jerky movements, or else floppy and lifeless

What should I do if I am worried about someone who is ill?

Trust your instincts. Someone who has meningitis or septicaemia could become seriously ill very quickly. Get medical help immediately if you are worried about someone who is ill.

Tumbler Test

If someone is ill and gets a rash, do the 'Tumbler Test'. Check for spots over the whole body.



Photograph Courtesy Prof P Brandtzaeg

If a glass tumbler is pressed firmly against a septicaemic rash, the marks will not fade. You will be able to see the marks through the glass.

IF THIS HAPPENS GET MEDICAL HELP IMMEDIATELY.



Photograph Courtesy Dr A Riordan

Watch out for tiny red or brown pin prick marks, which can change into larger red or purple blotches or blood blisters.



This rash can be harder to see on dark skin, so check for spots especially on paler areas like palms of the hands, soles of the feet, the stomach, inside the eyelids and on the roof of the mouth.

Remember, a very ill person needs medical help even if there are only a few spots, a rash that fades or no rash at all.

Freefone 24 hour helpline



080 8800 3344 (UK)

1800 41 33 44 (Republic of Ireland)

Know the Symptoms

Meningitis and septicaemia are very dangerous and can kill in hours.

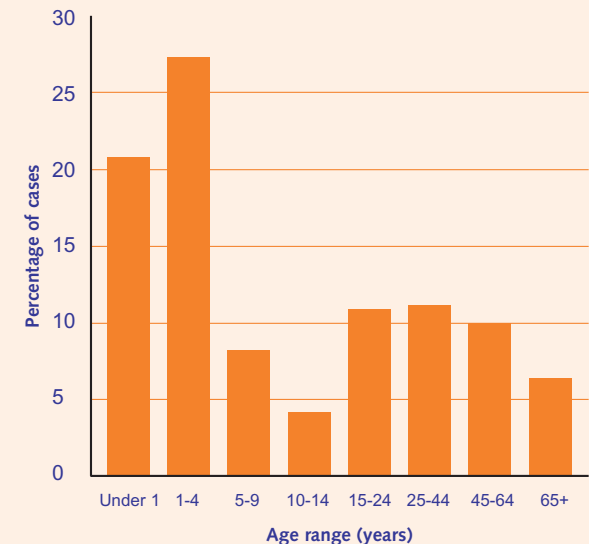
Meningitis means swelling of the lining around the brain and spinal cord. Septicaemia is blood poisoning caused by the same germs. They can occur together or separately.

People who are faced with meningitis and septicaemia have to act fast to save a life - **a race against time**.

Questions and Answers

Q1 Only children and college students get it. **True/False?**

A1 False. Babies, children and young people are most at risk, but anyone of any age can get meningitis and septicaemia, as the graph shows.



Typical distribution of bacterial meningitis and meningococcal septicaemia by age