



Hawaii State Department of Health

Disease Investigation Branch

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Haemophilus Influenzae Type b

(Hib)

What is *Haemophilus influenzae* type b disease?

Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib) is a bacterium that causes very serious disease in young children. *Haemophilus influenzae* bacteria can affect many different parts or organ systems of the body, causing meningitis (infection of the tissues covering the brain and spinal cord), pneumonia (infection of the lungs), and blood, bone, skin, ear, throat or joint infections.

How do you get Hib disease?

Hib spreads from person-to-person in droplets from coughing or sneezing. Those at greatest risk of getting Hib disease are children less than 5 years old. Others at risk for Hib infection are those with sickle cell disease and persons with immune system problems. Hib disease is uncommon in healthy older children and adults.

What are the symptoms of Hib disease?

The symptoms of Hib disease depend on which part of the body is affected, but often include fever, vomiting, fatigue, and a stiff neck.

When do symptoms start?

The symptoms usually start 2 to 4 days after exposure to the bacteria.

For how long is a person contagious for Hib disease?

If not treated, an infected person is contagious for as long as the bacteria stays in the nose and throat. It is not known exactly how long this can be, but proper treatment with antibiotics can reduce the time one is contagious.

What is the treatment for Hib disease?

A doctor can prescribe medicine to treat Hib infections. A hospital stay is often needed to treat severe Hib infections.

Is there a vaccine for Hib?

Yes. The Hib shot or vaccine is recommended for all children in Hawaii. Children should receive the Hib vaccine at 2, 4 and 6 months of age, with a booster at 12-15 months.

How can you keep from getting it?

The best way to prevent children from getting Hib disease is to make sure they get their shots on time.

For more information, see the CDC's website at http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo/haeminfluserob_t.htm