

Haemophilus Influenzae Type B (HIB)

Haemophilus influenzae type B (Hib) is a kind of bacteria. The Hib bacteria can cause serious disease, such as a deadly brain infection in children. Serious Hib infections are most common in infants 6 to 12 months old. A person does not need to have symptoms to spread the bacteria. Hib is passed on in droplets from the nose or throat of infected people when they cough, talk or sneeze. Symptoms usually appear within 10 days after exposure to Hib.

Signs and Symptoms

Symptoms depend on the part of the body that is infected. They may include:

- Meningitis symptoms (fever, weakness, vomiting, stiff neck)
- Pneumonia symptoms (trouble breathing, cough, fever, chills)
- Warm, red, swollen joints
- Swelling and discoloration of the skin, mainly of the cheek and around the eye



Picture 1 Antibiotics should be taken right away to prevent serious illness.

Treatment and Prevention

A person with Hib should begin taking antibiotics right away to prevent brain damage or death. People who have Hib can spread the disease until their antibiotic treatment has started.

Many states require proof a child has had the Hib vaccine before starting school. Infants and toddlers should get injections of the vaccine at 2 months, 4 months, 6 months and 12 to 15 months of age. Many infants who get the Hib vaccine are also protected from Hib-related illnesses like meningitis, pneumonia and infections of the blood, bones and joints.

When to Get Emergency Help

Call 911 or go to the emergency room if your child has these signs of an allergic reaction to the Hib vaccine within the first few hours after the shot: Hoarseness or wheezing, hives, paleness, weakness, fast heartbeat or dizziness.

Call your child's doctor if:

- Your child has trouble breathing or is breathing much faster than usual.
- Your child has a bluish or gray color to the fingernails or lips.
- Your child is older than 6 months and has a fever over 102°F, or younger than 6 months and has a temperature over 100.4°F.

When Your Child May Return to School or Childcare

Your child may return to school or childcare after their doctor has seen the child and given written permission, and the child feels well enough to take part in daily activities.