



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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CORONADO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT HAS MENINGITIS ***Vaccine is Recommended to Prevent Disease***

The County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHSa) is reporting that a fifth grade student at Silver Strand Elementary School in Coronado has meningococcal meningitis, a type of bacterial meningitis.

“Bacterial meningitis is spread by close contact,” said Wilma Wooten, M.D. M.P.H., County Public Health Officer. “Oral secretions transferred by sharing food, drinks, water bottles, lip balm, and other oral contact spreads this potentially serious disease and should be avoided.

“To help prevent the spread of this infection, parents should ensure that their children receive the age-appropriate vaccinations,” Dr. Wooten added.

HHSa worked with school officials to identify children and others who had close contact with the ill child. The school has sent letters to parents of children in the child’s classroom notifying them of signs and symptoms of the disease and recommended precautionary measures. The child’s last day at school was March 23. The child was hospitalized and is doing well.

Meningococcal meningitis is an infection of the fluid of a person’s spinal cord and the fluid that surrounds the brain. Meningococcal meningitis can be quite severe and may result in brain damage, hearing loss, or learning disability. It can be treated with a number of effective antibiotics.

Symptoms are fever, headache, stiff neck and unusual fatigue. Rash, sore throat and vomiting can also occur. The time between exposure to the disease and the onset of symptoms is usually 3-4 days. Children exhibiting any of these symptoms should be taken immediately to a healthcare provider or emergency room.

For information on meningococcal meningitis and the vaccine, contact the HHSa Community Epidemiology Branch at (619) 515-6620.

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