

PUBLIC HEALTH AUTHORITY STATEMENT

The Public Health Agency (PHA) has been informed of two confirmed cases of meningococcal infection in a school in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust area.

The PHA is informed about all cases of probable or confirmed meningococcal infection and will take appropriate actions following national guidelines.

Both families have received preventative medication (antibiotics), as have children and staff at the school. This is being done as a precautionary measure and the risk to the wider public is extremely low.

It is important that everyone is aware of the signs and symptoms of meningococcal disease.

Early symptoms of the disease may include [this has been copied from the Meningitis section of NI Direct]:

- a high temperature (fever) over 37.5C (99.5F)
- being sick
- a headache
- a blotchy rash that doesn't fade when a glass is rolled over it (this won't always develop)
- a stiff neck
- a dislike of bright lights
- drowsiness or unresponsiveness
- seizures (fits)

Babies with meningococcal disease tend to be irritable when picked up and have a high pitched cry, stiff body and jerking movements.

Should anyone develop any of these they should contact their GP or local Emergency Department immediately.

Further information on the illness can be found at www.nidirect.gov.uk/conditions/meningitis