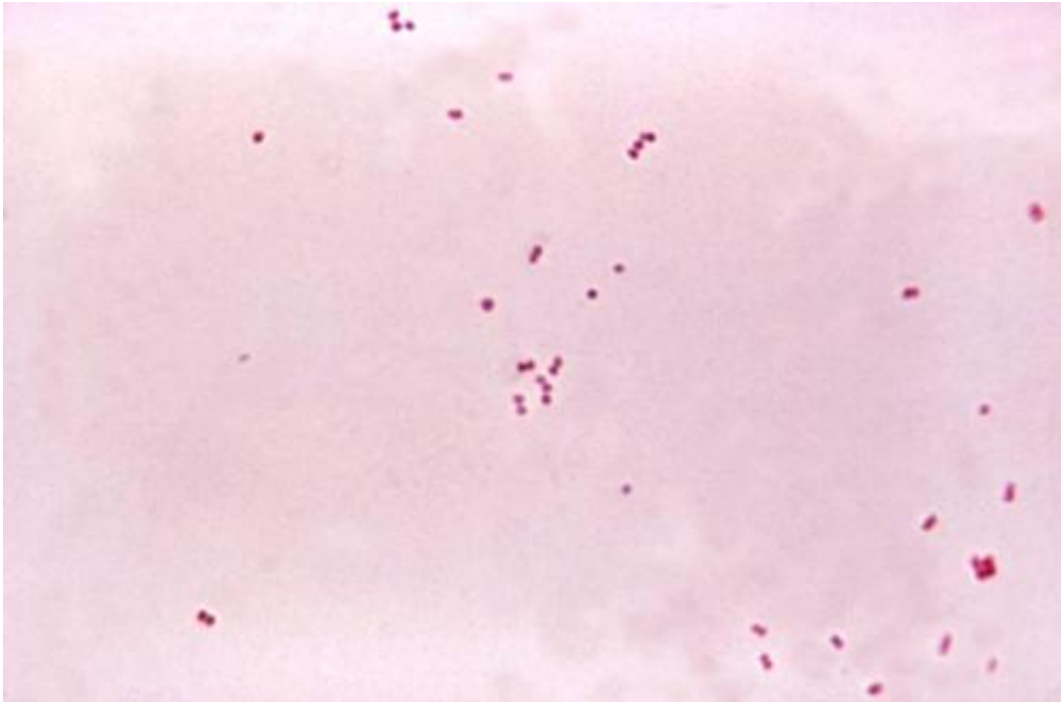


Meningitis: Know the signs

January 17 2023



Gram stain of meningococci from a culture showing Gram negative (pink) bacteria, often in pairs. Credit: public domain

Meningococcal meningitis and septicaemia (blood poisoning) are rare but severe diseases that can kill or leave people with life changing disabilities and health problems. Young adults, and university students in particular, are at increased risk.

Symptoms can start like a bad case of flu but they get worse very quickly. It is important to be aware of the symptoms and be prepared to

take [urgent action](#), as early treatment can be lifesaving.

Symptoms can include:

- a rash
- confusion/delirium
- a bad headache
- vomiting
- a stiff neck
- muscle and joint pain
- a high temperature/fever
- cold hands and feet
- a dislike of bright lights
- drowsiness or difficulty waking up
- rapid breathing
- diarrhoea and stomach cramps

Not everyone will develop all these symptoms—they can appear in any order and be mixed between the two illnesses.

Many of the early signs—vomiting, fever, aches, general tiredness and headaches—are also signs of less serious illnesses like colds and flu but someone with meningitis or septicaemia will usually become seriously ill in a matter of hours. It is also potentially very serious and can kill.

You should get [medical advice](#) as soon as possible if you or a friend have symptoms of concern or are a condition that is rapidly getting worse.

More information: www.nhs.uk/conditions/meningitis/symptoms/

Provided by University of Liverpool

Citation: Meningitis: Know the signs (2023, January 17) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2023-01-meningitis.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.