

Meningitis kills 20 Nigerian school students

February 29 2024



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A meningitis outbreak in Nigeria has killed at least 20 boarding school students and infected hundreds more, the education commissioner in northeastern Yobe state said on Wednesday.

"We have recorded an outbreak of meningitis in six [secondary schools](#) in

the state which led to the death of 20 students out of the 473 infected," Mohammed Sani Idriss said.

The epicenter of the outbreak is the city of Potiskum and its Government Technical College has been worst hit, accounting for 17 of the deaths, Idriss said.

The schools are under medical surveillance with isolation centers and emergency care facilities, he said.

"The situation is under control because we have not recorded any new cases in the past two days while 370 of those hospitalized have recovered and been discharged," Idriss added.

Meningitis is an infection of the lining around the brain and spinal cord, transmitted through respiratory droplets or throat secretions.

It has a high fatality rate and children are especially at risk.

Nigeria lies in the so-called "meningitis belt" of sub-Saharan Africa, stretching from Senegal in the west to Ethiopia in the east, where outbreaks of the disease are common.

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Citation: Meningitis kills 20 Nigerian school students (2024, February 29) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2024-02-meningitis-nigerian-school-students.html>

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