



WORLD MENINGITIS DAY FACTSHEET

#AfterMeningitis #WorldMeningitisDay

www.comomeningitis.org

MENINGITIS FACTS AND FIGURES:

- Meningitis is the inflammation of the membranes that protect the **brain** and spinal cord.
- Meningitis affects more than **2.8 million** people from all over the world each year.
- 1 in 5 bacterial meningitis survivors develop one or more **after effects**.
- Even with fast diagnosis and treatment, up to 20% of bacterial meningitis patients will **die**.
- Meningitis can kill in **24 hours**: seek urgent medical attention if you suspect the signs or symptoms.
- Anyone of **any age** can be affected by meningitis; infants, adolescents and older people are at greatest risk.

PHYSICAL AFTER EFFECTS:

Meningitis and septicaemia can occur together. For survivors, after effects can include:

MENINGITIS:

- Acquired brain injury
- Sight problems
- Hearing problems
- Learning difficulties
- Behavioural changes
- Depression
- Exhaustion
- Memory problems

SEPTICAEMIA:

- Limb loss
- Poor blood supply to the feet and hands
- Bone growth problems
- Organ failure
- Skin scarring

THE IMPACT OF MENINGITIS:

Family members of meningitis survivors with after effects may grieve, feel guilt, uncertainty, and undertake increased caring responsibilities.

UK research has found that:

2.3 x

increased risk of reported depression/anxiety for family of meningitis survivors with after effects

40%

of informal carers report more ill health than the general population

THE IMPORTANCE OF VACCINES:

- Speak to your **local health care provider** to see what vaccines are available to you.
- High meningitis vaccination rates can also protect unvaccinated populations from meningitis – this is known as **herd immunity**.
- **Multiple vaccines** are needed for protection against the most common types of meningitis (such as MenACWY, MenB, PPV23, Hib and MMR).
- **Antibiotic resistance** is where germs evolve to defeat the drugs designed to kill them. Vaccines help to stop it by preventing diseases.

HOW TO SPOT MENINGITIS:

Signs and symptoms differ depending on age. They can include one or more of the following:

ANY AGE:

- Cold hands and feet
- Blank expression
- Vomiting/diarrhoea
- A rash
- Fever
- Seizures
- Drowsiness
- Confusion

ADULTS:

Severe headache
Dislike of bright lights
Muscle/joint pain
Stiff neck

BABIES/TODDLERS

No appetite
Bulging head
High-pitched cry