# **Viral Meningitis Exposure Notice**

Your child may have been exposed to **Viral Meningitis** on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Please check your child for symptoms through \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

If your child has symptoms, please contact your child’s healthcare provider.

**A child with viral meningitis may not return to school or childcare until he or she no longer has symptoms.**

**Viral meningitis** is an infection of the tissue that covers the brain and spinal cord. It is most often caused by viruses like the type that causes hand-foot-and-mouth disease, chickenpox, mumps, viruses spread by mosquitos, and others. However, only a small number of people who get these illnesses will develop meningitis.

## Symptoms are:

* Fever
* Irritability
* Stiff neck
* Sensitivity to bright light
* Sleepiness, trouble waking from sleep, or low energy
* Nausea and/or vomiting
* Loss of appetite Symptoms usually start 3 to 7 days after a person is exposed to the virus, but it can be different for each person. This can be a serious disease for babies, children younger than 5 years old, and people with immune system problems.

## How is viral meningitis spread?

If you have close contact with a sick person, you may become infected with the virus that caused the meningitis, but you are not likely to develop meningitis. Only a small number of people who are infected with viruses will develop meningitis.

## Viruses that cause meningitis are spread in different ways, such as:

Coughing and sneezing

Kissing, hugging, or sharing eating utensils with people who are sick

Touching the stool of someone who is sick • A bite from a mosquito carrying a virus

Touching a surface or object with the virus on it.

## What can I do now?

Watch your child for symptoms of this disease. It is very important to call a doctor or healthcare provider right away if you think you or your child might have meningitis. At first, viral meningitis has the same symptoms as meningitis caused by bacteria, but bacterial meningitis worsens and can cause severe illness and death. Only a doctor can determine if you or your child has this disease, if it is caused by a virus or bacteria, and the best treatment. Most people with viral meningitis usually get better within 7 to 10 days.

## Prevention****:****

* Wash hands frequently and thoroughly with warm water and soap.
* Cover coughs with arm, not hands.
* Keep child at home until child no longer has symptoms.