

Immunization No Guarantee Against Meningococcal Disease

Contributed by OJ Fagbire
Saturday, 28 July 2007

Within the Wellington and Hutt Valley regions, five children younger than eight-years-old have been reported as having the meningococcal disease despite

having received the vaccination against it.

Three of the five cases have been established while the other two are likely but not yet confirmed. While two of the five are within the same family, the

other three seem unrelated.

Dr. Margot McLean, the Medical Officer of Health, reports that two of the children were completely immunized against meningococcal while others ere partially

immunized. The children all exhibited the same symptoms, a rapid onset of fever and a rash. Luckily the parents were aware of symptoms of meningococcal and

brought their children to the doctors quickly. All of the children are now recovering.

Regional Public Health warns parents to watch for the symptoms of the disease and to seek medical attention, regardless of the immunization status of their

children. Early on, meningococcal can appear to be the normal flu. From there the disease can progress rapidly and become difficult to diagnose.

Look for the following signs in a child: fever, sleepiness, floppiness or difficulty waking, restless or crying, aversion to light, refusing to eat or drink,

vomiting or breaking out in a rash.

The symptoms are similar in adults and include: headache or fever, sleepiness, feeling confused, delirious, stiffness of the neck, aversion to bright light,

and pain in the joints and muscles.