

## HAEMOPHILUS INFLUENZAE TYPE B (HIB) FACT SHEET

### What is Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)?

*Haemophilus influenzae* are bacteria that cause serious illness.

### What are the symptoms of Hib?

The symptoms will depend on what part of the body is affected by these bacteria. Persons may have fever, congestion, body aches, poor appetite, irritability, difficulty swallowing, joint pain, excessive sleepiness. Hib disease can cause:

- Meningitis: can lead to lasting brain damage and deafness
- Pneumonia
- Severe swelling in the throat, making it hard to breathe
- Infections of the blood, joints, bones, and covering of the heart
- Death

### Who can get Hib infection?

Hib disease usually strikes children under 5 years old. Children can get Hib disease by being around other children or adults who may not show any symptoms. Before the Hib vaccine was introduced, Hib disease was the leading cause of bacterial meningitis among children under 5 years old in the United States.

### What is the treatment for Hib infection?

Infants and young children may require hospitalization. Treatment involves the use of antibiotics.

### How is Hib infection spread?

Respiratory droplets from infected persons contain the bacteria so when they cough or sneeze the bacteria are spread into the air and onto surfaces.

### How is Hib infection prevented?

Before Hib vaccine, about 20,000 children in the United States under 5 years old got severe Hib disease each year and nearly 1,000 people died. The Hib vaccine protects children against Hib disease. Infants need four doses of Hib vaccine by age 1.

Most persons 5 years and older do not need Hib vaccine. However, discuss the need for vaccine with your health care provider if you have sickle cell anemia or if you have a weakened immune system due to any of the following factors: HIV/AIDS, treatment with drugs such as long-term steroids, cancer treatment, bone marrow or organ transplant or a damaged spleen.

For more information please contact Contra Costa Public Health at 925-313-6740 and visit our website at <http://cchealth.org/cd/>

Additional information may be found at the following links:

<http://www.cdc.gov/hi-disease/index.html>

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/hib/default.htm>