



5/14/2026

Dear Parents and Students,

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that a suspect case of meningococcal disease occurred at Bloomington High School South. This disease is caused by the bacterium *Neisseria meningitidis* and generally affects people in two ways:

- meningitis (an inflammation of the tissues covering the brain and or spinal cord)
- bloodstream infection (that usually leads to bleeding under the skin)

The case is under medical supervision and can no longer spread the disease. A person must have direct contact with an infected person's saliva during the 7 days prior to the onset of illness in order to become infected. The disease is not spread through casual contact or by simply being in the same room as an infected person.

The Monroe County Health Department is in the process of identifying and contacting persons who have had close contact with the case and is making recommendations on who should have antibiotics to prevent infection. Close contacts include persons:

- living in the same household as the infected person;
- who have kissed the infected person on the mouth;
- who have items that come in contact with an infected person's saliva, such as drinks from the same container (i.e. water bottles, cups, glasses), eating utensils, cigarettes, or lipstick

For all other persons, including those who had casual contact as would occur in most school related activities, the risk of infection is very low. Preventive antibiotics are not recommended for casual contacts of infected persons.

Although the risk of disease to other students is quite low, parents are advised to be alert for signs of meningococcal disease. These include, but are not limited to, a sudden onset of fever, headache, stiff neck, confusion and sometimes a rash. If any of these signs or symptoms should develop, the student should be taken immediately to a physician or emergency room to be evaluated for possible meningococcal disease. Antibiotic treatment of the disease is usually successful, especially if it is started early after symptoms begin.

To reduce the spread and risk of any communicable disease, it is recommended that students and staff not share items that come in contact with another person's saliva such as foods, drinks, lipstick/balm, or cigarettes. Additional preventive measures for meningitis include washing hands frequently and thoroughly both at home and in school and covering noses and mouths when coughing or sneezing and washing hands well afterwards.





Monroe County Health Department

Monroe County, Indiana

Health Department

119 W. 7th Street
(812) 349-2543

The most effective way to protect you and your child against certain types of meningitis is to get vaccinated. Vaccines are available for three types of bacteria that frequently cause meningitis: (*Neisseria meningitidis*, *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, and *Haemophilus influenzae*) and four viruses that can cause meningitis (measles virus, mumps virus, influenza virus, and varicella zoster virus). Consult your healthcare provider or local health department to determine if you or your child are up-to-date on available vaccinations. For more information about which vaccines are recommended for you and your child, please consult the CDC's *Vaccine Schedules For You and Your Family* at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/imz-schedules/index.html>

If you have questions, please call the Monroe County Health Department at 812-349-2068. Please call 812-360-6373 after 3:00pm today, 5/14, and Friday 5/15.

Sincerely,

Lori Kelley, PhD, RT (R)(CT)(MR) | *Health Administrator*

Monroe County Health Department

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