



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Suspected Case of Meningococcal Disease at Bloomington High School South**

**BLOOMINGTON** – The Monroe County Health Department is following up on a suspected case of meningococcal disease that occurred at Bloomington High School South. The case is under medical supervision and can no longer spread the disease. A person must have direct contact 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, who will be provided antibiotics as clinically appropriate. 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 came in contact with an infected person’s saliva, such as drinks from the same container (i.e. water bottles, cups, glasses), eating utensils, cigarettes/vapes, 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, including (but not limited to):

- Sudden onset of fever
- Headache
- Stiff neck
- Confusion
- Sometimes a rash

If any of these signs or symptoms develop, the student should be taken immediately to a physician or emergency room to be evaluated for potential meningococcal disease. Antibiotic treatment is usually successful, especially if started early after symptoms begin.

To reduce the risk and spread of any communicable disease, it is recommended that students and staff not share items that come into contact with another person's saliva, such as foods, drinks, lipstick/balm, or cigarettes/vapes. Additional preventive measures 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.

The most effective way to protect yourself/your child against certain types of meningitis is to get vaccinated. Consult with your healthcare provider 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 Scheduled 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 Nursing Services at 812-803-6364.

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