

ASEPTIC (VIRAL) MENINGITIS

<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/disease/Aseptic-Meningitis/>

Meningitis is an infection of the membranes surrounding the brain and the spinal cord. People sometimes refer to meningitis as spinal meningitis.

Meningitis can be caused by a virus or by non-viral agents (such as a bacterium or a fungus). Different viruses can lead to viral meningitis.

Symptoms

Aseptic (viral) meningitis is serious but rarely fatal in healthy people with normal immune systems. Usually, symptoms last from 7 to 10 days and the patient recovers completely.

People with this condition may have the following symptoms:

- Headache
- Neck stiffness
- Sensitivity to light
- Increased sleepiness
- Unresponsiveness
- Fever
- Nausea, vomiting
- Lack of appetite

Prevention

To prevent spreading viruses that can cause aseptic meningitis, be sure to:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing
- Wash your hands often
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth
- Keep current on all recommended vaccinations

School Exclusion Policy

Children with viral or aseptic meningitis should be kept out of school until they are fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever suppressing medications. Rules for exclusion of sick children from school and childcare are outlined in the Texas Administrative Code, specifically [Rule 97.7](#) for schools and [Rule 746.3603](#) for childcare.

Source: Texas Department of State Health Services