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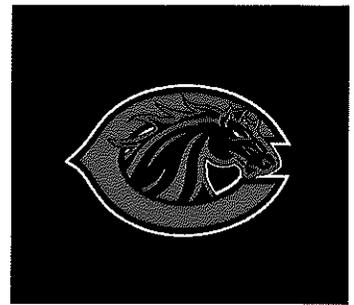
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December 6, 2018

Dear Parent or Guardian:

This letter is to inform you that an individual at Carter Middle School has been diagnosed with viral meningitis. The individual will not be back in the building until a doctor has provided clearance to return.

According to the Center for Disease Control, common symptoms of viral meningitis are fever, severe headache, stiff neck, sensitivity to bright lights, drowsiness or confusion, and nausea and vomiting. In babies, the symptoms are difficult to identify, but may include fever, fretfulness or irritability, difficulty in awakening, and unwillingness to eat. These symptoms usually last seven to ten days. See the back of this letter for information provided by the Genesee County Health Department.

It is important to seek medical attention immediately if you or your child have any of the previously mentioned symptoms. Viral meningitis can be a serious illness.

There is no specific treatment for viral meningitis. Bed rest, plenty of fluids, and fever reducers such as acetaminophen are often recommended. Aspirin should not be given to children due to the risk of Reye's syndrome.

The viruses that cause viral meningitis are contagious. Many different viruses can cause meningitis. About 90% of cases of viral meningitis are caused by members of a group of viruses known as enteroviruses, such as coxsackieviruses and echoviruses. Enteroviruses, for example, are very common during the summer and early fall, and many people are exposed to them. However, most infected persons either have no symptoms or develop only a cold or rash with low-grade fever. Only a small proportion of infected persons actually develop meningitis. Therefore, if you are around someone who has viral meningitis, you have a moderate chance of becoming infected, but a very small chance of developing meningitis.

As a precaution, our custodial staff disinfected surfaces at Carter Middle School last night in addition to the normal nightly cleaning procedures. We encourage all of our students to remember to wash their hands regularly.

Proper hand washing and thorough cleaning of surfaces are the best ways to prevent the spread of viral meningitis. If you have further questions, consult with your health care provider or contact the Genesee County Health Department at info@gchd.us, or call 810-257-3612

Sincerely,


Fletcher Spears III
Superintendent
Clio Area Schools



What is viral meningitis?

- An illness with swelling of the tissue surrounding the brain and spinal cord caused by one of several types of viruses. It is the most common type of meningitis.

What are symptoms that could occur?

- Sudden onset of fever
- Severe headache
- Stiff neck
- Bright lights hurting the eyes
- Drowsiness or confusion
- Nausea/vomiting
- Rash
- Intestinal problems
- Breathing problems

How is it spread?

- By direct contact with respiratory secretions (saliva, sputum, or nasal mucus) or stool of an infected person
- Symptoms usually develop between 3 – 7 days from the time of exposure and last about 10 days

How is it diagnosed and treated?

- Primary care provider and laboratory testing of spinal fluid
- Treatment is aimed at relief of symptoms
- Since symptoms are similar to bacterial meningitis, which is more severe and can be fatal, it is important for people suspected of having meningitis to seek medical care to rule out bacterial

Should the sick individual be isolated?

- No

When can the individual return to the general population?

- When recommended by primary care provider and individual feels well

How can Viral Meningitis be prevented?

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you sneeze or cough
- Wash hard surfaces and toys with soap and warm water, or disinfect
- Refrain from kissing or sharing personal items, such as eating utensils, cups, and towels
- Immunize children against Varicella (chickenpox), Measles, and Mumps, and get a flu shot every year

Should facilities do special cleaning?

- Special cleaning is not necessary. Routine cleaning with EPA approved products is recommended

If I have any other questions, whom can I contact?

- Call the Genesee County Health Department at 257-1017