



Health Protection Agency

Surrey & Sussex Local Health Protection Unit

31 January 2012

Our ref: HPZ 384325

County Hall North
Chart Way
HORSHAM
RH12 1XA

Tel +44 (0)845 894 2944

Fax +44 (0)1403 251006

www.hpa.org.uk

TO STAFF, STUDENTS & PARENTS OF BRIGHTON HOVE & SUSSEX SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

Dear Student, Parent or Carer,

I am writing to let you know that a student from the College has been admitted to hospital with septicaemia, probably caused by the meningococcal bacteria. The student is responding well to treatment. There is no reason to make any change in the College routine and no reason for students to be kept at home.

Meningococcal bacteria are carried in the back of the throat of about one in ten people at any one time, but only very rarely cause illness. Most people who carry the bacteria become immune to them. The bacteria do not spread easily and those who have had prolonged, close contact with the person are at a slightly greater risk of getting ill. These people have been identified and given antibiotics to stop the bacteria spreading.

Although the risk of another case is very small, it is sensible to be aware of the signs and symptoms:

Meningitis	Septicaemia
Fever	Fever
Vomiting	Vomiting
Severe Headache	Bruising/ Rash
Stiff Neck	Rapid Breathing
Dislike of bright light	Joint/Muscle Pain
Seizures	Cold Hand and Feet
Confusion/delirious	Confusion/delirious
Extreme sleepiness / difficulty waking	Extreme sleepiness / difficulty waking

Not all of these signs and symptoms may show at once, but someone with this illness will become very ill. The illness may progress over one or two days but can develop very rapidly, sometimes in a matter of hours.

Diagnosis in the early stages can be difficult. The early signs can be like bad flu symptoms, but be watchful and use your instincts. If someone becomes ill with some of these signs or symptoms contact your doctor urgently and ask for advice.

Further information is available from:
The Meningitis Research Foundation
www.meningitis.org, 0808 800 3344 (24hr Helpline)
The National Meningitis Trust
www.meningitis-trust.org, 0800 028 1828 (24hr Support Line)

Dr. M. Nicholls
CCDC
GMC: 3492172

cc. Local Education Authority, Head of School Nursing, HPA communications