



# PUBLIC FACT SHEET

## VIRAL MENINGITIS

### What is meningitis?

An infection caused by a virus which involves the tissues around the brain and spinal cord.

### How is meningitis spread?

Meningitis may be spread through the following ways:

- Airborne droplets from the nose or throat of people with the virus.
- Contact with infected stool (poop).

### What are possible symptoms?

Symptoms may include:

- Fever
- Severe headache
- Stiff neck
- Bright lights hurt the eyes
- Drowsiness or confusion
- Nausea and vomiting
- **In infants** – fever, irritability, difficulty in awakening the baby or the baby refuses to eat.

### How is meningitis diagnosed?

By a laboratory test of spinal fluid.

### What is the treatment for meningitis?

There is no specific treatment for viral meningitis. Most patients recover completely on their own. Bed rest, plenty of fluids, and treatment of fever and headache are recommended.

### For more information on viral meningitis:

Ottawa County Health Department

[www.miOttawa.org](http://www.miOttawa.org)

Medline Plus/National Institutes of Health

[www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000680.htm](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000680.htm)