

Meningitis and Septicaemia

Know the Symptoms !!

Meningitis and Septicaemia are very dangerous and can kill in hours. Recognising the symptoms in its early stages can literally save lives.

Meningitis means swelling of the lining around the brain and spinal cord. Septicaemia is blood poisoning caused by the same germs.

Both meningitis and septicaemia can be hard to recognise in the early stages because the symptoms are like many childhood illnesses. Symptoms can appear in any order, but the first symptoms are usually fever, vomiting, headache and feeling unwell, just like many mild illness. Below is a list of what to look out for. The **red flag symptoms** often appear earlier than symptoms like neck stiffness and dislike of light, and before more serious symptoms.





























Other symptoms to look out for in babies are:

Tense or bulging soft spot on their head

Refusing to feed

Irritable when picked up, with a high pitched or moaning cry

A stiff body with jerky movements, or else floppy and lifeless

	Septicaemia	Meningitis
Fever and/or vomiting 		
Severe headache 		
Limb/joint/muscle pain <small>(sometimes stomach pain/diarrhoea)</small> 		
Cold hands and feet/shivering 		
Pale or mottled skin 		
Breathing fast/breathless 		
Rash <small>(anywhere on the body)</small> 		 <small>Not present in all cases</small>
Stiff neck 		 <small>Less common in young children</small>
Dislike of bright lights 		 <small>Less common in young children</small>
Very sleepy/vacant/difficult to wake 		
Confused/delirious 		
Seizures (fits) may also be seen 		

The Meningitis Research Foundation is a charity who offers support to people affected by meningitis and septicaemia. We also fund vital research into the prevention, detection and treatment of the diseases. You can contact us 24 hours a day on our helpline 1800 41 33 44 or call us in our Dublin office (01) 8196931 from 9am-5pm. For any further information please contact Clodagh Hegarty RGN (Medical Information Officer) and she will be able to help with all your queries.