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Meningitis Symptoms

Meningitis is the inflammation of the lining around the brain and the spinal cord. Septicaemia is the blood poisoning from the disease and is potentially life threatening.

Symptoms

The symptoms can appear in any order and not everyone gets all the symptoms. Those emboldened below are the more serious symptoms which require immediate medical attention:

- Fever/vomiting
- Limb/joint/muscle pain
- Cold hands and feet/shivering
- Breathing fast/breathless
- **Rash (anywhere on body)**
- Fever/vomiting
- Severe headache
- Stiff neck
- Dislike of bright lights
- **Very sleepy/vacant/difficult to wake**
- **Confused/delirious**
- **Seizures**

The rash

The septicaemia rash characteristically has tiny red or brown pin pricks which can change into purple blotches or blood blisters.

The rash can be harder to see on dark skin so areas like palms, soles of feet, inside eyelids and the roof of the mouth should be checked.

The tumbler test

If a glass tumbler is pressed firmly against a septicaemia rash the marks will not fade: the rash will be seen through the glass.

Even if the rash does fade it may not be safe to assume that the patient does not have septicaemia and urgent advice should be sought for an ill patient.