



**SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**RIO GRANDE COLLEGE**  
*A Member of the Texas State University System*

**Office of Student Services**  
**400 Sul Ross Drive**  
**Uvalde, Texas 78801**

**(830) 279-3003**  
**(830) 758-5037**  
**(830) 703-4812**  
**Fax (830) 279-3016**

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT BACTERIAL MENINGITIS**

This information is being provided to all new college and transfer students in the state of Texas. Bacterial Meningitis is a serious, potentially deadly disease that can progress extremely fast – so take caution. It is an inflammation of the membranes that surround the brain and spinal cord. The bacteria that cause meningitis can also infect the blood. This disease strikes about 3,000 Americans each year, including 100-125 on college campuses, leading to 5-15 deaths among college students each year. There is a treatment, but those who survive may develop severe health problems or disabilities.

**WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?**

- High fever
- Rash or purple patches on skin
- Light sensitivity
- Confusion and sleepiness
- Lethargy
- Severe headache
- Vomiting
- Stiff Neck
- Nausea
- Seizures

There may be a rash of tiny, red-purple spots caused by bleeding under the skin. These can occur anywhere on the body.

**HOW IS BACTERIAL MENINGITIS DIAGNOSED?**

- Diagnosis is made by a medical provider and is usually based on a combination of clinical symptoms and laboratory results from spinal fluid and blood tests.
- Early diagnosis and treatment can greatly improve the likelihood of recovery.

**HOW IS THE DISEASE TRANSMITTED?**

- The disease is transmitted when people exchange saliva (such as by kissing or by sharing drinking containers, utensils, cigarettes, toothbrushes, etc.) or come in contact with respiratory or throat secretions.

**HOW DO YOU INCREASE YOUR RISK OF GETTING BACTERIAL MENINGITIS?**

- Exposure to saliva by sharing cigarettes, water bottles, eating utensils, food, kissing, etc.
- Living in close conditions (such as sharing a room/suite in a residence hall or group home).

## **WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF THE DISEASE?**

- Death (in 8 to 24 hours form perfectly well to death)
- Permanent brain damage
- Kidney failure
- Learning disability
- Hearing loss, blindness
- Limb damage (fingers, toes, arms, legs) that requires amputation
- Gangrene
- Coma
- Convulsions

## **CAN THE DISEASE BE TREATED?**

- Antibiotic treatment, if received early, can save lives and chances of recovery are increased. However, permanent disability or death can still occur.
- Vaccinations are available and should be considered for:
  - those living in close quarters
  - college students 25 years or younger
- Vaccinations are effective against 4 of the 5 most common bacterial types that cause 70% of the disease in the United States (but does not protect against all types of meningitis).
- Vaccinations take 7-10 days to become effective, with protection lasting 3-5 years.
- The cost of the vaccine varies, so check with your health care provider.
- Vaccination is very safe – most common side effects are redness and minor pain at the injection site for up to two days.
- Vaccination is available at your local health care provider.

## **HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION?**

- Contact your own health care provider
- Contact your Student Services Office – 830-279-3037 or 830-279-3003.
- Contact your Local or Regional Texas Department of Health office: 830-278-7173.
- Contact web sites: [www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo); or [www.acha.org](http://www.acha.org)



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**MENINGITIS ON CAMPUS**  
**Know Your Risk**

**Certain college students are at increased risk for meningococcal disease, a potentially fatal bacterial infection commonly referred to as meningitis. A United States health advisory panel recommends that college students, particularly first year students living in residence halls, learn more about meningitis and vaccination. The Texas State Legislature is also requiring that all new students be informed about the potential dangers of the disease.**

**I have read the above statement and received the handout on “Important Information About Bacterial Meningitis”**

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**Student’s Signature**

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**Date**