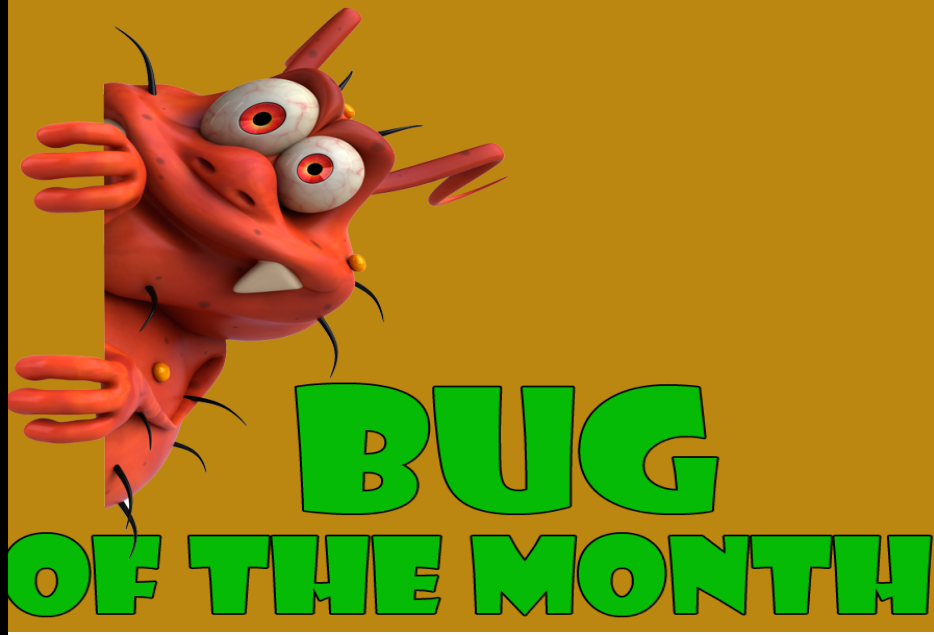


For Staff /Patient Education



Haemophilus Influenzae B

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What is it?

- *Haemophilus influenzae* (including Hib) is a bacterium that can cause a severe infection, occurring mostly in infants and children younger than five years of age. In spite of its name, *Haemophilus influenzae* does not cause influenza (the "flu"). It can cause lifelong disability and be deadly.
- There are six identifiable types of *Haemophilus influenzae* bacteria (a through f) and other non-identifiable types (called non-typeable).
- The one that most people are familiar with is *Haemophilus influenzae* type b, or Hib that can cause many kinds of infections.
- When the bacteria invade parts of the body that are normally free from germs, like spinal fluid or blood, this is known as "invasive disease." Invasive disease is usually severe and can sometimes result in death. This includes Bacteremia (blood infection); Meningitis (infection of the covering of the brain and spinal cord); Epiglottitis (an inflammation of the windpipe; can cause breathing trouble); Cellulitis (skin infection); Infectious arthritis.
- The most common severe types of *Haemophilus influenzae* disease are: Pneumonia (lung infection); Bacteremia (bloodstream infection); Meningitis (infection of the covering of the brain and spinal cord).
- *Haemophilus influenzae* disease, including Hib disease, causes different symptoms depending on which part of the body is affected.
- The incubation period (time between exposure and first symptoms) of *Haemophilus influenzae* disease is not certain, but could be as short as a few days.
- **Symptoms of pneumonia** usually include: Fever (but older people may have lower than normal body temperature); Cough; Shortness of breath; Chills; Sweating; Chest pain that comes and goes with breathing; Headache; Muscle pain; Excessive tiredness
- **Bacteremia symptoms** : Fever; Chills; Excessive tiredness; Pain in the belly; Nausea; Vomiting; Diarrhea; Anxiety; Shortness of breath; Altered mental status (confusion)
- **Meningitis** in children, teens, and adults, symptoms typically include sudden onset of: Fever; Headache; Stiff neck; Nausea; Vomiting; Increased sensitivity to light (photophobia); Altered mental status (confusion); Infants may appear to be lethargic (limp, loss of alertness) or irritable, or may vomit or feed poorly. In young children, doctors may also test the child's reflexes, which can be abnormal with meningitis.

How is it spread?

- The primary mode of Hib transmission is presumably by respiratory droplet spread, although firm evidence for this mechanism is lacking.
- Neonates can acquire infection by aspiration of amniotic fluid or contact with genital tract secretions during delivery.

Where is it found?

- Humans (asymptomatic carriers) are the only known reservoir.
- Hib does not survive in the environment on inanimate surfaces.

Prevention and Control?

- There's a vaccine that can prevent *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib) disease, but not the other types ("strains") of *Haemophilus influenzae* bacteria. See Vaccination(<http://www.cdc.gov/hi-disease/vaccination.html>).
- **Hib vaccine** is recommended for all children younger than 5 years of age and is usually given to infants starting at 2 months of age.
- In certain situations, patients at increased risk for invasive Hib disease who are fully vaccinated need additional doses of Hib vaccine and unimmunized older children, adolescents, and adults with certain specified medical conditions should receive Hib vaccine.
- **Antibiotic Prophylaxis:** people in close contact with that patient should receive antibiotics to prevent them from getting the disease.
- Droplet precautions in addition to standard precautions are observed.

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Source:

<http://www.cdc.gov/hi-disease/index.html>



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