

Am I at risk of bacterial meningitis and sepsis?

Answering your questions



#DefeatMeningitis



meningitis.org

What is meningitis?

Meningitis is inflammation of the lining around the brain and

What is sepsis?

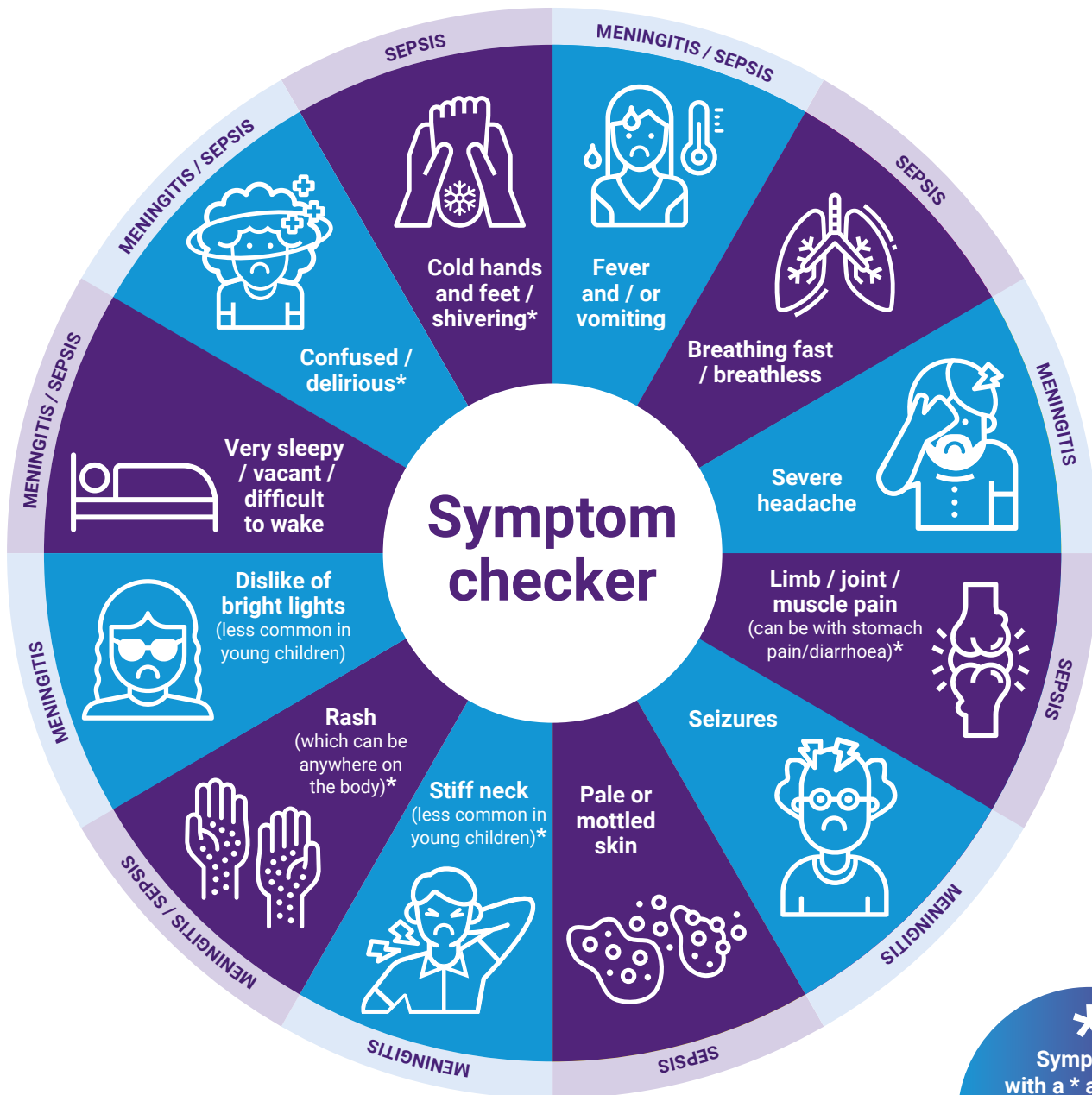
Medically, sepsis is when bacteria enters the bloodstream, causing blood poisoning which can trigger sepsis. Sepsis is an overwhelming

The information in this leaflet is focused on meningococcal disease.

What are the symptoms of meningitis and sepsis?

Remember:

- > in any order.
- >
- >
- > **Trust your instincts and always get medical help fast.**



Symptoms with a * are more specific to meningitis and sepsis and less common in milder illnesses.

Other signs to watch out for in babies

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

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Am I at risk?

**How do people
get meningitis?**

**Is there an
incubation period?**

appear within three to five

Why do some people get meningitis, or sepsis and meningitis?

We do not know why a small number of people become poorly from germs that are harmless to most of us. This is why continued research into these diseases is vital, for prevention and for improved treatment.

We do know that certain age groups have a higher risk of getting bacterial meningitis and sepsis. Babies and young children are particularly at risk because they have less developed immune systems.

Other at-risk groups include teenagers and young adults, and adults over the age of 65.

How common is meningococcal disease?

Over the past decade around 1–2 people in every 100,000 have had the disease each year in Ireland.

For more information on risk groups:
meningitis.org/meningitis/are-you-at-risk

Can meningitis and sepsis be prevented?

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Ireland's routine vaccination schedule:
[hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/pubinfo/pcischedule/babiesbornonafter01102024](https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/pubinfo/pcischedule/babiesbornonafter01102024)



Free helpline:
UK 0800 8800 3344
Ireland 1800 41 33 44
www.meningitis.org

We provide healthcare professionals with essential resources to help prevent, diagnose and treat meningitis and meningococcal sepsis.

Meningitis Research Foundation

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FAQs

Can meningitis be treated?

How will I know if I've got meningitis?

In the early stages, it can be very difficult to tell meningitis and sepsis apart from milder diseases, such as the flu. **It is vital to know the symptoms and to get medical help immediately if you are worried that you or someone else may have meningitis.**

Who decides what needs to happen for people who have been in contact with someone who has meningitis?

is contacted and offered strong antibiotics, usually rifampicin or ciprofloxacin

Someone I know has meningitis. Do I need antibiotics?

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Someone I know has meningitis. What vaccines will I get?

FAQs (continued)

My family member has meningitis. Where can we get support?

The partner of a family member has had a case of meningitis at their place of work. Should I stop them seeing their partner?

Is it safe for my child to play with someone who has had meningitis?

What should I do if I am worried about someone who is ill?

The Tumbler Test

don't wait for a rash to appear –
get medical help

Press a clear glass tumbler firmly against

get urgent medical help
immediately



Remember, a very ill person needs medical help even if there are only a few spots, a rash that fades or no rash at all.

HSE Guidance

<https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/meningitis-and-septicaemia/>



Where can I get support?

When:

How:

Email: _____

Live chat: meningitis.org (where you can also find a range of guides and resources)

We need your help

in breakthrough scientific research to improve meningitis prevention

If this leaflet has helped you, please help us to continue our work by



Join our community



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