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about meningitis visit:  
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**MENINGITIS  
CENTRE  
AUSTRALIA**

*Raising awareness.  
Every second counts.*

Free Call 1800 250 223  
Mon–Fri 8am–4pm (WST).  
11 Aberdare Road, Nedlands WA 6009  
info@meningitis.org.au

Founding member of the Confederation of  
Meningitis Organisations (CoMO)  
www.comomeningitis.org



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## Viral Meningitis

### What You Need To Know



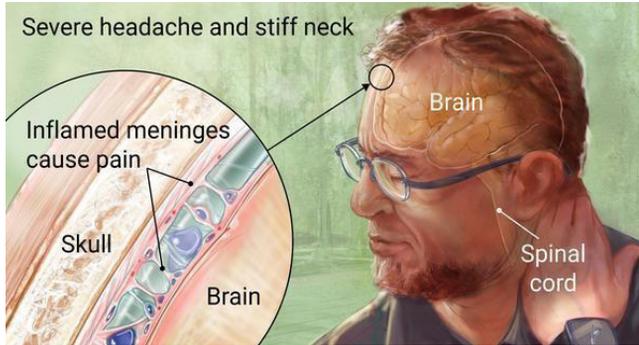
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## What is Viral Meningitis?

Viral meningitis is a rare but serious infection of the lining of the brain or the meninges. It can be caused by a range of viruses including gastro, measles, mumps, chicken pox and herpes.

## How do you get Viral Meningitis?

Viral Meningitis is usually contracted by breathing in viral particles that have been sneezed or coughed into the air by another infected person.



You can also catch it by touching dirty surfaces which may contain faeces or poo (toilets or nappy change tables)

The virus can easily spread from your hands to your mouth and once swallowed can cause many problems.

## How do I know if I have Viral Meningitis?

Tell your GP about the signs and symptoms you have. The GP may order some tests like throat swabs, blood tests, poo sample and in some cases a lumbar puncture.

Your GP will tell you how long you will remain infectious for, depending on the virus that is responsible.

## Treatment for Viral Meningitis

There is NO vaccine for viral meningitis and no specific medication. Most people usually make a full recovery but it does take a while to recover as the illness has affected the brain. In some cases, people may be hospitalised to ensure they do not have any other infection.

Treatment is generally the same as for any other viral infection and consists of plenty of rest, pain medication and plenty of fluids.

## Prevention of Viral Meningitis

Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze and cough. Use a tissue or even your elbow to sneeze and cough into, to stop your hands from becoming contaminated.

Wash your hands in warm soapy water after the toilet, gardening, changing a nappy or sneezing and coughing.

Don't share drinks, food or cigarettes.

## Signs and symptoms

	Babies	Children & Adults		Babies	Children & Adults
 Fever, cold hands and feet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	 Pale blotchy skin/spots/rash	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
 Vomiting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	 Unusual crying/refuses to feed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
 Tired/floppy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	 Bulging soft spot on top of head	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Blank expression	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	 Stiff neck/dislikes bright lights	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
 Dislikes being handled	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	 Severe headache	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
 Rapid breathing/grunting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	 Fitting/stiff jerking movements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

These are common symptoms and can appear in any order. Some may not appear at all. Don't wait for a rash. **If concerned, see a doctor immediately.**