

Babies and Toddlers



Fever, cold hands and feet



Refusing food and vomiting



Fretful, dislike being handled



Drowsy, floppy, unresponsive



Rapid breathing or grunting



Pale, blotchy skin
Spots/rash
See Glass Test



Unusual cry, moaning



Tense, bulging fontanelle (soft spot)



Stiff neck, dislike bright lights



Convulsions/seizures

Be aware

Meningitis and septicaemia often happen together. Be aware of all the signs and symptoms.

Symptoms can appear in any order. Some may not appear at all.

Early symptoms can include:

fever **headache** **vomiting**

muscle pain

fever with cold hands and feet

Someone with meningitis or septicaemia can get a lot worse very quickly. Keep checking them.

Trust your instincts - get medical help immediately

Children and Adults



Fever, cold hands and feet



Vomiting



Drowsy, difficult to wake



Confusion and irritability



Severe muscle pain



Pale, blotchy skin
Spots/rash
See Glass Test



Severe headache



Stiff neck



Dislike bright lights



Convulsions/seizures

Septicaemia

Some bacteria can cause meningitis and septicaemia (blood poisoning). People with septicaemia may develop a rash of tiny red 'pin pricks' which can develop into purple bruising.

THIS RASH DOES NOT FADE UNDER PRESSURE. DO THE GLASS TEST.



Press the side of a clear glass firmly against the skin.

Spots/rash may fade at first.

Keep checking!

- Fever with spots/rash that do not fade under pressure is a **MEDICAL EMERGENCY**
- **DO NOT WAIT FOR A RASH.** If someone is ill and getting worse, get medical help immediately
- **ON DARK SKIN**, the spots/rash can be more difficult to see. Do not wait for a rash. Be aware of all the signs and symptoms.

Getting medical help

If you are concerned it could be meningitis or septicaemia, you can:

Call NHS 111/NHS 24 or your GP

In an emergency you can:

- Dial 999 for an ambulance
- Go to your nearest accident and emergency department

Describe the symptoms and say you think it could be meningitis or septicaemia.

Early diagnosis can be difficult. If you have had advice and are still concerned, get medical help again.

Trust your instincts - get medical help immediately

© Meningitis Now Oct 2013. Next review Oct 2014. References for content of this card are available on our website. Reg. charity number 803016 (England & Wales) SC037790 (Scotland)



Meningitis and Septicaemia Common signs and symptoms

Meningitis now

24-hour nurse-led helpline
0808 80 10 388

www.MeningitisNow.org

Download our free app
Available on iPhone and Android