
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Joint Press Release #1

Date: September 28, 2017

RE: Viral Meningitis in Lassen County

Lassen County Public Health Department and Banner Lassen Medical Center are partnering to manage the identification and reporting of patients who present for care of signs and symptoms of viral meningitis. At this point in time, there is one confirmed case and 21 suspect cases of viral meningitis.

We have established a call center for community members who are need of information regarding this situation. The phone number is (530) 252-2300 and the phone line will be staffed 24 hours a day, until further notice.

At this time, Lassen High School and Lassen Community College will remain closed and will tentatively re-open on Monday, October 2, 2017. Extracurricular activities at these school sites will also remain canceled until further notice. Lassen County Public Health and Banner Lassen Medical Center consulted with the Center for Disease Control and based on the information provided we have taken all of the appropriate measures, and no other school closures are recommended, at this time.

Viral Meningitis symptoms include:

- Fever
- Headache
- Sensitivity to light
- Stiff neck
- Fatigue
- Some people may also have rash, sore throat, diarrhea, nausea and vomiting.

There are no vaccines to protect against the most common causes of viral meningitis but the following steps can help lower the risk of getting infected or spreading the infection to other people.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after using the toilet, changing diapers, or coughing and/or blowing your nose.
- Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with tissue or your upper shirt sleeve, not your hands.
- Avoid close contact such as kissing, hugging, or sharing cups or eating utensils with people who are sick.
- Clean and disinfect potentially contaminated items and surfaces with diluted bleach (1/4 cup of bleach in 1 gallon of water).
- Stay home when you are sick.

Persons feeling unwell with symptoms of meningitis are urged to seek medical attention to rule out bacterial meningitis. Strict isolation of persons with viral meningitis is not required, however people diagnosed with viral meningitis should not return to school or work until their symptoms are gone. If you are sick stay home, this is the best way to not spread any illness.

For additional information go to: <https://www.cdc.gov/meningitis/viral.html>

We will continue to update the public as information becomes available.