

Haemophilus influenzae (type b)

Hib

Hib is a risk group 2 bacterium. It is considered a **reproductive pathogen** as infection is associated with high rates of chorioamnionitis, preterm birth, and fetal loss. Invasive infection can cause severe maternal outcomes, including septic abortion and meningitis.

How can I be exposed to Hib?

- Hib can be transmitted through inhalation of aerosol respiratory secretion droplets from infected individuals as well as via direct contact with secretions.
- Laboratory workers may be exposed by inhalation of airborne infectious materials, autoinoculation, or ingestion.
- Vertical transmission may occur during pregnancy, delivery, and breastfeeding.

How can I protect myself from exposure?

- Avoid direct skin contact by wearing protective clothing and gloves.
- Avoid mucous membrane exposure by using eye/face protection for procedures that may produce splashes.
- Avoid respiratory exposure by using a biosafety cabinet or other primary containment device and wearing a respirator for procedures that may produce aerosols, particularly centrifugation, resuspension of pellets, and washing.
- The use of needles, syringes, and other sharp objects should be strictly limited, and additional precautions should be taken when working with animals.

What should I do if I think I've been exposed?

Wash the affected area immediately for 15 minutes with soap and water and seek medical attention.

What symptoms should I look for after a potential exposure?

Infection with Hib can cause meningitis, pneumonia, epiglottitis (infection of upper airway), septic arthritis, cellulitis (localized tissue inflammation), osteomyelitis (bone infection), endophthalmitis (inflammation of eye's internal

fluids or tissues), urinary tract infections, abscesses, endocarditis (inflammation of heart's inner lining or valves), or generalized bacteremia. Symptoms depend on the organs affected.

How long does it take for symptoms to develop?

Symptoms develop 2-4 days after exposure.

Is there a treatment or vaccine?

Several effective vaccines have been developed and are used globally. Antibiotics can be used for direct contacts and susceptible persons (i.e., pregnant/breastfeeding)

Can I transmit it to other people?

Yes as described in the exposure section, however Hib is not highly contagious. It is also not communicable 48 hours after initiation of antibiotic treatment.

Can I transmit it to my pets?

No, Hib is a human obligate parasite.

Can it survive on surfaces?

Hib can survive for 12 days on dry inanimate surfaces, 18 hours in mucous, and 12 hours on plastic.

See Pathogen Safety Data Sheet for More Information

