

You could have it. and not even know!

This story is based on the events that happened to a high school student just like you. I hope you read this, because it could save you or your friend's lives.

This student was diagnosed with Meningitis in January 2007. Whether she lived or died depended on the first 48 hours, which went moment by moment. Think about being sixteen, in a coma and on life support. Think about your family and your friends, those school dances you'll have to miss and other normal teenage stuff... and more importantly life itself. Definitely something none of us want to miss out on. Imagine those long hours being monitored in ICU, hooked up to so many machines. Then after a week, when you can breathe on your own, when you're actually awake, you can't walk, you can't even lift your head because you're so weak. You lose all your strength fighting for your life, breathing is even an effort. Then when you get a chance to think things over you worry about your friends and family, What if they got sick because of you? What if the Janeway staff wasn't as amazing as they are? And what were the chances of ending up deaf or with amputations or with other side effects in the end? Too high. Thanks to the Janeway that didn't happen in this case but too many others aren't as lucky.

Teenagers and College/University students are the most likely to get this terrible disease. It is difficult to diagnose and when seconds count to save your life you need to know the facts.

The Symptoms Include:

- Flu like symptoms and
- Extreme sensitivity to light
- Cold sensation in hands or feet
- Migraine feeling
- Rash
- Stiff Neck

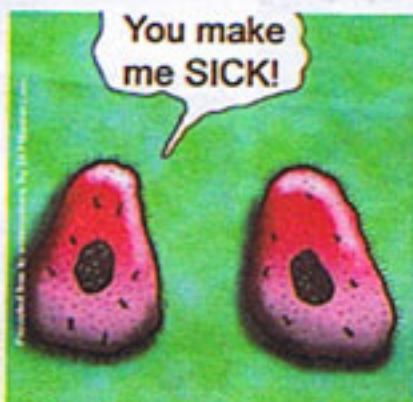
Don't be that typical invincible teenager. You could have it. Get yourself to a hospital if you have any of the symptoms.

It can be transmitted through kissing, sharing food or drinks, even if you're near someone that sneezes without covering their mouth. You can even catch it from someone that doesn't seem sick. It affects everyone differently.

There is a vaccine called Menactra which prevents Meningitis. It's really worth the pinch! To learn more: www.meningitis.ca

Did you guess why I know so much? This student was me.

— Lacey Hamlyn



When germ relationships go bad