



New Hampshire Health Alert Network

Health.Alert@nh.gov

Status: Actual
Message Type: Update NH-HAN #20121014 Fungal Meningitis Update #3
Severity: Severe
Sensitive: Not Sensitive
Message Identifier: NH-HAN #20121019 Fungal Meningitis Update #4
Delivery Time: 12 hours
Acknowledgement: No
Originating Agency: NH Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health Services

DATE: October 19, 2012 **TIME:** 1730 EDT

TO: Physicians, Physician Assistants, Nurses, Infection Control Practitioners, Infectious Disease Specialists, Hospital Emergency Departments, Hospital CEOs, Laboratory Response Network, Manchester Health Department, Nashua Health Department, NHHA, NH School Nurses and Administrators, Community Health Centers, DHHS Outbreak Team, DPHS Investigation Team, Ambulatory Surgical Centers, Public Health Network, and DPHS Management Team

FROM: Sharon Alroy-Preis MD, State Epidemiologist

SUBJECT: Fungal Meningitis Outbreak Associated with NECC Products Update #4

New Hampshire DHHS, Division of Public Health Service (NH DPHS) recommends:

- Awareness of FDA Med Watch alert asking clinicians to contact their patients who received the following New England Compounding Center (NECC) products:
 - Any injectable medication
 - Ophthalmic solutions used in conjunction with eye surgery
 - Cardioplegia solution
- Evaluating any patient who received these products with high vigilance and consideration of fungal etiology in the differential diagnosis, taking into account possible long incubation periods.
- Low threshold for lumbar puncture and/or imaging for patients presenting with signs or symptoms of meningitis or local complications who received epidural or paraspinal injection of a NECC product.
- Low threshold for arthrocentesis and/or imaging for patients presenting with worsening peripheral joint symptoms who received peripheral joint injection of a NECC product.
- Awareness of current testing recommendations for CSF and joint fluid
- Timely reporting to NH DPHS of any suspect cases that may be related to these NECC products
- Please refer to previous HANs (10/4/12, 10/6/12, 10/10/12, 10/14/12)
<http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/alerts/han.htm> for previous specific information on this outbreak.

National Outbreak Update:

The national case count as of October 19, 2012, related to this outbreak is 271 cases in 16 states including 21 deaths.

On October 15, 2012 FDA released Med Watch alert advising physicians to contact patients to whom the following NECC products were administered after 5/21/12 and report to them adverse events:

- Any injectable medication
- Ophthalmic solutions used in conjunction with eye surgery
- Cardioplegia solution

Updated information on the alert can be found at:

<http://www.fda.gov/Drugs/DrugSafety/ucm322734.htm>

A draft patient notification letter created by FDA is available at

<http://www.fda.gov/downloads/Drugs/DrugSafety/UCM324538.pdf>

NH Specific Information:

In New Hampshire, 24 facilities/providers received medications from NECC that meet the above criteria. The list of providers can be found at:

<http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us/dphs/cdcs/documents/meningitis-facilities-list.pdf>

Every facility/healthcare provider has been contacted by DPHS, is reviewing its records to verify that medications were used for patient care, and, if so, contacting those patients.

DPHS is requesting that providers report any patient presenting with symptoms consistent with infection following the use of the NECC product that meets the above criteria. So far, New Hampshire has identified eight cases associated with the outbreak: six with meningitis and two with septic arthritis following Methylprednisolone Acetate injections. Investigation of additional symptomatic patients, including those who received other NECC products, is underway. You can refer to NH DHHS website for NH specific information:

<http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us/dphs/cdcs/fungal-meningitis.htm>

Updated testing recommendations:

For patients undergoing lumbar puncture, please send CSF for:

Cell count and differential, glucose and protein, gram stain, bacterial culture and fungal culture. Please save CSF (1-5 cc) for PHL for fungal PCR testing at CDC.

For patients undergoing arthrocentesis:

Cell count and differential, gram stain, bacterial culture and fungal culture, and examinations for crystals. Please save synovial fluid (at least 1cc) for PHL for fungal PCR testing at CDC.

Additional Information on the national outbreak and resources for clinicians (including updated treatment recommendation) can be found at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/hai/outbreaks/meningitis.html>

For any questions regarding the contents of this message, or to report cases, please contact NH DHHS Infectious Disease Investigation and Surveillance Sections at 603-271-4496.

After hours or toll free (In NH) at 800-852-3345, ext. 4496 or 603-271-5300 and ask for the public health professional on call.

DEFINITION OF TERMS AND ALERTING VOCABULARY

Message Type

Alert: Original alert
Update: Prior alert has been updated and superseded
Cancel: Prior alert has been cancelled
Error: Prior alert has been retracted

Status

Actual: Refers to a live event
Exercise: Designated recipients must respond to the communication or alert
Test: Related to a technical and/or system test

Severity

Extreme: Extraordinary threat to life or property
Severe: Significant threat to life or property
Moderate: Possible threat to life or property
Minor: Minimal threat to life or property
Unknown: Unknown threat to life or property

Sensitive

Sensitive: Indicates the alert contains sensitive content
Not Sensitive: Indicates non-sensitive content

Message Identifier

A unique alert identifier that is generated upon alert activation

Delivery Time

Indicates the time frame for the delivery of the alert

Acknowledgement

Indicates whether an acknowledgement on the part of the recipient is required to confirm that the alert was received, and the time frame in which a response is required.

Originating Agency

A guaranteed unique identifier for the agency originating the alert.

Alerting Program

The program sending the alert or engaging in alerts and communications using PHIN Communication and Alerting (PCA) as a vehicle for their delivery.

You have received this message based upon the information contained within our emergency notification database.

If you have a different or additional e-mail or fax address that you would prefer to be used, please contact:

Denise M. Krol, MS
NH HAN Coordinator
Denise.Krol@dhhs.state.nh.us

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