**Important Information about Bacterial Meningitis**

**Please Read!**

**Texas Tech University/Texas Tech Health Sciences Center Students**

- The 77th Texas Legislature (2001) passed a law requiring that all public institutions of higher education in Texas provide all new students information about bacterial meningitis.
- We are extending the requirement a step further and are notifying ALL Texas Tech/Texas Tech Health Sciences Center Students to have this important information.

**Bacterial Meningitis**

- Meningococcal disease is a potentially life-threatening infection caused by the bacterium *Neisseria meningitidis*.
- Bacterial meningitis is an inflammation of the membranes that surround the brain and spinal cord.
- This disease affects approximately 3000 Americans each year, including 100-125 people on college campuses, leading to 5-15 deaths per year among college students.

**Risks and Exposure**

- The organism is spread from person-to-person through the exchange of respiratory and throat secretions such as coughing and kissing.
- Sharing cigarettes, water bottles, eating utensils and food, may increase your exposure.
- Resident Hall-style living may also play a role as crowded environments facilitate the spread of the infection.

**Symptoms and Diagnosis**

- Seek medical attention immediately if one or more of these symptoms appear:
  - High Fever
  - Rash or purple patches on skin
  - Light sensitivity
  - Confusion and sleepiness
  - Lethargy
  - Severe Headaches
  - Vomiting
  - Stiff neck
  - Nausea
  - Seizures
• **Early diagnosis is important.**
• Your healthcare provider will use a combination of clinical symptoms and laboratory tests to diagnose the disease.

Treatment and Consequences if not treated
• Antibiotic treatment is effective if exposure and disease is detected early.
• Possible consequences of the disease:
  - Permanent brain damage
  - Learning disability
  - Gangrene
  - Convulsions
  - Limb damage that may require amputation
  - Kidney failure
  - Hearing Loss, Blindness
  - Coma
  - Death

Prevention
• Vaccinations are effective against 4 of the 5 most common bacterial types that cause 70% of the disease in the United States.
• Vaccinations take 7-10 days to become effective, with protection lasting 3-5 years.
• The vaccination is very safe – most common side effects may include redness and minor pain at the injection site for up to two days.

Information
• If you have more questions contact:
  - Your own healthcare provider
  - Your local or regional Texas Department of Health
  - Contact – Family Practice Clinic, TTU Health Sciences Center
  - 806.743.2757
• Visit these web sites for more information -
  - [www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo)
  - [www.acha.org](http://www.acha.org)
Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center
School of Allied Health Sciences

Bacterial Meningitis Form

Student Name:__________________________________________

Social Security Number:___________________________________

Program/Campus:________________________________________

My signature below acknowledges that I have read and received information about Bacterial Meningitis from the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Allied Health Sciences.

Signature:_________________________________________ Date:________________________