

March 5, 2010

## Meningococcal disease confirmed in student; risk of transmission low

CALGARY – Alberta Health Services (AHS) has confirmed a case of meningococcal disease in a student at St. Mary's High School. The risk of transmission of this infection to the general student and staff population is very low.

AHS has completed a thorough investigation, and 10 students identified as close contacts with the infected individual have received antibiotics as a preventative measure. Because the risk of transmission to the general school population is very low, only these 10 close contacts require preventative treatment.

In accordance with Calgary Catholic School District protocol, parents/guardians of St. Mary's High School students will receive a letter from the school principal today, advising of the very low risk for transmission.

Meningococcal disease is spread from person to person by direct contact with secretions from the nose and mouth. This can also occur through the sharing of items such as water bottles, utensils, lipstick, or cigarettes that have been in contact with saliva of an infected individual. Meningococcal disease is NOT spread through casual contact, such as being in the same room as an infected individual.

Dr. Judy MacDonald (Deputy Medical Officer of Health, AHS-Calgary) will be available to provide media with background information and education on meningococcal disease today at 11:15 a.m.

### Media Availability

Date: Friday, March 5, 2010  
Time: 11:15 a.m.  
Location: Southport Media Room  
10301 Southport Lane S.W.

Alberta Health Services is the provincial health authority responsible for planning and delivering health supports and services for more than 3.5 million adults and children living in Alberta. Its mission is to provide a patient-focused, quality health system that is accessible and sustainable for all Albertans.

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