

Sample Letter

SCHOOL LETTERHEAD

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are very saddened that a (Name of School) student (died/was diagnosed with ) on (date). According to the treating physician, the signs and symptoms were consistent with meningococcal infection. Laboratory tests done at the hospital (confirmed/suggest) this diagnosis. Meningococcal infection is found in the spinal cord (meningitis) or the blood (meningococemia). (Optional: The patient is recovering nicely.)

Meningococcal infection is NOT highly contagious. However, person to person transmission is possible from direct saliva contact. An individual who has had close contact with the patient (such as kissing, sharing eating utensils/food or the same beverage container) may be considered to have been exposed. It is recommended that all exposed individuals should be treated, prophylactically, with antibiotic medication. Rifampin is one of the drugs commonly chosen. Only those in close contact with the patient are usually given medication. Close contacts are household members, family, and the closest friends. Routine classroom and school contacts are usually not at risk. The decision to use prophylactic medication must be reached in consultation with your private source of medical care.

(Health Department Name) believes that all close contacts have already been notified. The symptoms of meningococcal infection to be aware of are abrupt onset of chills, fever, vomiting, headache, stiff neck, and rash. Contact your physician if your son/daughter should develop any or all of the above symptoms and inform the physician that your son/daughter may have had contact with an individual with meningococcal infection.

The (Health Department Name) will continue to investigate the situation. If you or your health care provider have any questions, Please call (Name of School Contact) at (Phone Number) or (Health Department Name) at (Phone Number).

Sincerely,

(Name), Principal (Name),

(County-specify) Health Officer

(This letter has been provided courtesy of Montgomery County Health Department.)