

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Meningococcal Infection Confirmed in Two Santa Clara University Students -  
News Conference Wednesday at 10:30 AM**

**Santa Clara County, CA:** On Sunday, January 31, 2016 an undergraduate student at Santa Clara University became ill and was admitted to a local hospital with a suspected case of meningitis. This case is now laboratory confirmed to be meningococcal meningitis caused by the bacteria *Neisseria meningitidis* [nye-SEER-ee-ah men-in-JIT-teh-dis], serogroup B. The Santa Clara County Public Health Department (SCCPHD) also learned today that a second undergraduate student on campus who was admitted to a hospital with suspected meningococcal infection has been confirmed to have a bloodstream infection with *Neisseria meningitidis*. Meningococcal meningitis is an infection of the protective covering of the brain and spinal cord caused by the bacteria *Neisseria meningitidis*. Meningococcal infection can result in meningitis and/or septicemia (bloodstream infection).

SCCPHD is working closely with the University to identify students at increased risk of infection and provide preventive antibiotics. Additionally, the health department will be working with the University to vaccinate students on campus later this week. Students at increased risk are those who had close contact with the ill students in the week before they became ill. Meningococcal bacteria are carried in the throat and are transmitted from person to person by respiratory secretions (such as saliva and mucus) during close or lengthy contact.

Students, faculty, and staff of the University are being advised to be aware of the symptoms of meningitis and septicemia. The symptoms of meningitis include the sudden onset of fever, headache, and stiff neck. Patients may also have nausea, vomiting, confusion, and sensitivity to light. The symptoms of septicemia include fatigue, vomiting, diarrhea, cold hands and feet, chills, severe muscle aches, and rapid breathing. A dark purple or red rash may also be present and is a very concerning symptom in the context of the other symptoms. Persons with these symptoms should seek urgent medical attention. Symptoms can occur one to ten days after exposure, but three to four days after exposure is more typical.

Vaccines to protect against meningococcal infection are available. Two vaccines against serogroup B are licensed in the United States (Bexsero® and Trumenba®) and offer protection against infection with this strain. Because these vaccines were recently licensed in 2014 and 2015, it is unlikely that most students have received them and therefore unprotected against serogroup B infection. SCCPHD is recommending that students who have not received either Bexsero® or Trumenba® be vaccinated. SCCPHD are working with the University to vaccinate students on campus later this week.

The University is planning to sponsor a vaccine clinic on Thursday from 2:00 – 8:00 p.m. and Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on the Concourse Level of Leavey Center. The vaccine will be provided at no cost to students.

SCCPHD, and Santa Clara University will share additional details about the investigation, and the steps being taken to ensure the health of University community at a news conference **tomorrow** (Wednesday, February 3, 2016) beginning at 10:30 a.m. in front of the Public Health Department at 976 Lenzen Ave, San Jose CA 95126. Health Officer Dr. Sara Cody, and Jill Rovaris, Director of Health and Counseling Services at Santa Clara University will each give brief statements and will take questions from the media.

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