

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 4, 2016

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**Meningococcal Infection Confirmed in a Third Santa Clara University Student:
Vaccine Clinics to be Held on Campus Today and Tomorrow**

Santa Clara County, CA: On Wednesday afternoon (February 3, 2016) the Santa Clara County Public Health Department (SCCPHD) learned of a third confirmed case of meningococcal infection in a Santa Clara University student. Like the first two cases, this student is infected with the bacteria *Neisseria meningitidis* [nye-SEER-ee-ah men-in-JIT-teh-dis]. Additionally, all three ill students have now been confirmed to have the serogroup B strain of the bacteria.

The students all became ill on Sunday January 31st. As of this morning, two students remain hospitalized and both are listed in fair condition. A third student was discharged in good condition.

SCCPHD continues to work with Santa Clara University to identify students at high risk of infection in order to provide preventive antibiotics to keep them from becoming ill. So far, more than 200 students have received the preventive antibiotics. The antibiotics help protect students exposed to the bacteria from developing disease in the short term. Another important step is for students to get vaccinated.

Vaccination is the best way to help protect students from meningococcal infection with the Serogroup B strain. The Health Department and the University are working together to vaccinate students, starting today (Thursday). Vaccinations will be provided on campus from 2:00 – 8:00 p.m. on the Concourse Level of Leavey Center. An additional clinic will be held tomorrow (Friday) from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the same location. The vaccine Bexsero® will be provided at no cost to all Santa Clara University students. The Health Department is recommending that all undergraduate students get vaccinated. Please note that media will not be permitted entry to the vaccine clinic due to HIPPA and the need to protect the privacy of students.

Watch for these symptoms

The Santa Clara University community is advised to watch for these symptoms in themselves and others. 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. **People with these symptoms should seek urgent medical attention.**

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How the illness is spread

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. Meningococcal infection can result in *meningitis* and/or *meningococemia*. Meningitis is an infection of the protective covering of the brain and spinal cord, and meningococemia is a bloodstream infection. More information is available online at: www.cdc.gov/meningococcal/

This is an ongoing disease investigation; updates will be provided daily, by noon, at: www.sccphd.org

Health Officer Dr. Sara Cody, will be available for interviews today (Thursday) from 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. by appointment. Please contact Allison Thrash to schedule: (669) 225-0050 or Allison.Thrash@phd.sccgov.org

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