

# 6 Meningitis

## Transmission

- Droplets of saliva/mucus from one person to another, mainly while coughing or sneezing

## Symptoms

- Starts with sudden high fever and one of the following: neck stiffness, changed consciousness and sometimes skin rash
- If treated early, 90% of the cases can be cured and death prevented
- Without treatment, affects the nervous system and can cause death

## Prevention

- ➔ Mass vaccination of all children (by injection)
- ➔ Rapid identification of suspected meningitis cases
- ➔ Health promotion

- ➔ Referral of sick people to health facilities as soon as possible for proper medical treatment

## Vulnerable people

- Children who are not vaccinated are most at risk
- Displaced populations are another specific risk

## In case of epidemic

- ➔ Mass vaccination campaigns by the health authorities
- ➔ Rapid detection of suspected cases
- ➔ Referral to health facilities of these suspected cases

- ➔ Social mobilization of the community to get children vaccinated
- ➔ Health promotion
- ➔ Respiratory etiquette

## Volunteer actions

See the following **action tools** for more information on what actions to take against meningitis:

31	29	32	2	3	4	18	19	14	15	30	33
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## Community-based assessment questions

Make a map of the community and mark the information you gather on the map.

- When did the epidemic start?
- How many people live in the affected community?
- How many children under 5 years of age live in the affected community?
- Are children vaccinated or not?
- Who and where are the vulnerable people?
- How many people have died from yellow fever and where?
- How many people have fallen sick with yellow fever and where?
- Are there any health services and where?
- Are there going to be vaccination campaigns?
- Is there a health promotion programme in place?

## Actions

- Get to know health workers who are doing vaccinations and the centres where they are done.
- Know children and families who are hard to reach and help them reach vaccination centres.
- Help health workers make sure that all children are vaccinated.