

Search 

- [Request an Appointment](#)
- [Find a Doctor](#)
- [Find a Job](#)
- [Give Now](#)

- [Log in to Patient Account](#)
- [Translated Content](#)
- [Español](#)
- [Portuguese](#)
- [Arabic](#)
- [Mandarin](#)

- [Twitter](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Google](#)
- [YouTube](#)
- [Pinterest](#)

Appointments at Mayo Clinic

Mayo Clinic offers appointments in Arizona, Florida and Minnesota and at Mayo Clinic Health System locations.

[Request Appointment](#)

Diseases and Conditions



Meningitis

- [Basics](#)
- [In-Depth](#)
- [Expert Answers](#)
- [Multimedia](#)
- [Resources](#)
- [News From Mayo Clinic](#)

Definition

By Mayo Clinic Staff

Meningitis is an inflammation of the membranes (meninges) surrounding your brain and spinal cord.

The swelling associated with meningitis often triggers the "hallmark" signs and symptoms of this condition, including headache, fever and a stiff neck.

Most cases of meningitis in the U.S. are caused by a viral infection, but bacterial and fungal infections also can lead to meningitis. Depending on the cause of the infection, meningitis can get better on its own in a couple of weeks — or it can be a

Advertisement

If your loved one is taking **NAMENDA® (memantine HCl) tablets,**

[Click here to learn more about the availability of](#)

NAMENDA

[Learn more](#) ▶

life-threatening emergency requiring urgent antibiotic treatment.

If you suspect that you or someone in your family has meningitis, seek medical care right away. Early treatment of bacterial meningitis can prevent serious complications.

The Mayo Clinic Diet

What is your weight-loss goal?

5-10 lbs »

11-25 lbs »

25+ lbs »

Symptoms →

Share

Tweet

March 19, 2013

References ▾

#1 Hospital in the Nation

BEST HOSPITALS U.S. News & World Report HONOR ROLL 2014-15

YOU ARE...
THE CAMPAIGN FOR MAYO CLINIC

Mayo Clinic is a not-for-profit organization. Make a difference today.

Learn more

GIVE NOW >

Free E-newsletter

Subscribe to Housecall

Our general interest e-newsletter keeps you up to date on a wide variety of health topics.

Sign up now

Products and Services

- Mayo Clinic Membership
- Newsletter: Mayo Clinic Health Letter
- Book: Mayo Clinic Family Health Book, 4th Edition

See also

- Anthrax
- CT scan
- CT scans: Are they safe?
- Headache
- Lumbar puncture (spinal tap)
- Lyme disease
- Managing Meningitis

Show more ▾

If your loved one is taking NAMENDA® (memantine HCl) tablets,

Click here to learn more about the availability of NAMENDA

Learn more ▶

© 2014 Forest Laboratories, LLC. NAM19900 8/14

I am his rock

IMPORTANT RISK INFORMATION +

MAYO
CLINIC

Going Gluten FREE

**ESSENTIAL GUIDE to Managing
Celiac Disease and Related Conditions**

[Learn More ▶▶](#)

Mayo Clinic is a not-for-profit organization. Proceeds from website advertising help support our mission. Mayo Clinic does not endorse non-Mayo products and services.

Advertising & Sponsorship

[Policy](#) | [Opportunities](#)

Mayo Clinic Store

Check out these best-sellers and special offers on books and newsletters from Mayo Clinic.

[Try Mayo Clinic Health Letter FREE!](#)

[Mayo Clinic Book of Alternative Medicine](#)

[Get a better night's sleep with this three-step action plan](#)

[Reduce the impact of stress on your health](#)

[An authoritative and approachable guide to going gluten-free](#)

Ads by Google

Ads by Google

Low Income Cell Program

safelinkwireless.com

1000 Free Text/250 Free Minutes Every Month!

Files Finder

easyduplicatefinder.com

Download Free Scan (Recommended) Find and Remove Duplicate Files

MacWorld Award-Winner

roxio.com

Easily Burn Music, Data & Shows With Roxio Toast 12 for Mac.

Electric Cars Sale

dealhunter.us

BestSelling Electric Cars At Best Prices Ever!

Other Topics in Patient Care & Health Info

[Healthy Lifestyle](#)

[Symptoms A-Z](#)

[Diseases and Conditions A-Z](#)

[Tests and Procedures A-Z](#)

[Drugs and Supplements A-Z](#)

[Appointments](#)

[Patient and Visitor Guide](#)

[Patient Online Services](#)

[Home](#) > [Diseases and Conditions](#) > [Meningitis](#) > [Basics](#) > [Definition](#)

CON-20019713

[REQUEST APPOINTMENT](#)

[GIVE NOW](#)

[CONTACT US](#)

[ABOUT MAYO CLINIC](#)

[EMPLOYEES](#)

[SITE MAP](#)

[ABOUT THIS SITE](#)

Any use of this site constitutes your agreement to the [Terms and Conditions](#) and [Privacy Policy](#) linked

A single copy of these materials may be reprinted for noncommercial personal use only. "Mayo," "Mayo

We comply with the [HONcode standard for trustworthy health information](#): [verify here](#).

below.

[Terms and Conditions](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Notice of Privacy Practices](#)

Clinic," "MayoClinic.org," "Mayo Clinic Healthy Living," and the triple-shield Mayo Clinic logo are trademarks of Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research.



© 1998-2015 Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research. All rights reserved.