Merlin disease code: 03841 Haemophilus influenzae Invasive Disease

Isolates or specimens from cases in people <5 years must be sent to the Bureau of Public Health Laboratories

Clinical criteria for case classification

Invasive disease may manifest as pneumonia, bacteremia, meningitis, epiglottitis, septic arthritis, cellulitis, or purulent pericarditis; less common infections include endocarditis and osteomyelitis.

Laboratory criteria for case classification

**Confirmatory:**
Either of the following:
- Isolation of *H. influenzae* from a normally sterile body site (e.g., cerebrospinal fluid [CSF], blood, joint fluid, pleural fluid, pericardial fluid)
- Or detection of *H. influenzae*-specific nucleic acid in a specimen obtained from a normally sterile body site (e.g., blood or CSF), using polymerase chain reaction (PCR).

**Presumptive:**
Detection of *H. influenzae* type b antigen in CSF.

Epidemiological criteria for case classification

Not applicable.

Case classification

**Confirmed:**
A person with confirmatory laboratory criteria.

**Probable:**
Meningitis in a person with presumptive laboratory criteria.

Criteria to distinguish a new case from previous reports

Not applicable.

Comments

*H. influenza* invasive disease cases in people ≥5 years old are only reportable for laboratories participating in electronic laboratory reporting (ELR). Cases in people ≥5 years old will be automatically created and reported in Merlin based on ELR results, and will not require symptoms to meet the case definition. For case reports in people ≥5 years old received from health care providers or via paper laboratory results, cases do not need to be investigated or created in Merlin; however, county health departments can choose to enter and report these cases.

Cases in children <5 years old are reportable for all laboratories and health care providers. All cases in children <5 years old need to be investigated and reported, regardless of the method through which the case reports were received. **Extended data in Merlin is only required for those cases in people <5 years old.**
Positive antigen test results from urine or serum specimens are unreliable for diagnosis of *H. influenzae* disease and should not be used as a basis for case classification.

Serotype should be determined for all *H. influenzae* isolates because Hib vaccines protect against serotype b organisms only. This testing is especially important for children <5 years of age to determine possible vaccine failure or failure to vaccinate. Positive antigen test results from urine or serum specimens are unreliable for diagnosis of *H. influenzae* disease. Sputum cultures are not confirmatory as sputum is not obtained from a sterile site.