



Merlin disease code: 03841 Haemophilus influenzae Invasive Disease

[Paper case report form](#)



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

Merlin extended data required for cases <5 years

## 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. influenzae* 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.