

Soundbite Script – No time to waste with bacterial meningitis

Dr. Syed Zaidi, Family Practice Physician, OSF HealthCare

“Anything in close vicinity to your brain. It's unlikely but higher risk people who have other chronic comorbid conditions such as diabetics, heart failure, seizures, or IV drug use, which is a different kind of a risk factor, as well as HIV. Those who might have a weaker immune system such as children, or on the other spectrum, older in age are also at a higher risk.”

Dr. Syed Zaidi, Family Practice Physician, OSF HealthCare

“You start to worry when you have fevers, chills, sweats, but the hallmark when we as clinicians get a little worried is when you have neck stiffness, difficulty moving your neck and confusion of cognitive impairment that comes on pretty abruptly. One day, you're pretty normal and then all of a sudden, you're either slurring your speech or your memory's not right. Other people notice or you even pass out.”

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“In babies the bacteria that are commonly involved are a little different. We typically think about the common ear infection in the child or newborns are higher risk for other types of bacteria known as Group B strep, in addition to listeria, which is another bacteria that can be commonly acquired even through the birthing process. Not all women who are pregnant undergoing delivery will get screened for that. We have safeguards in place, but I think it's also important to educate the mother, the parents, and the family, about these risks and why we do these screenings.”

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“I think bringing up what you're due for in terms of prevention of all conditions, whether it be cancers or infections. Vaccines are a part of that. I think the street goes both ways. Your doctor will bring it up too, but I think it's also very important for us as consumers of healthcare, to be wise to be able to ask those questions and engage in that conversation.”