

Kingella Kingae

Kingella kingae is a type of bacteria that can cause infection in children and adults. People can carry kingella kingae in their respiratory secretions and not be infected, this is called colonization. Invasive infections, which occur in blood, spinal fluid, bone, or joint fluid, are rare and usually affect children less than four years.

Transmission

Kingella kingae is spread via:

- **Person to person** through respiratory secretions and saliva.

Kingella kingae infections typically affect children six months to four years of age, with most cases occurring in children younger than two years. As children less than four years are more likely to harbor the bacteria, transmission and outbreaks are more likely in child care settings. Infections in older children and adults are rare but can occur in immunocompromised individuals.

Symptoms

Most people do not have symptoms. People with mild illness may have:

- **Runny nose**
- **Sore throat**
- **Sore mouth**

Severe Kingella kingae infections can result in

- **Bacteremia** (blood infection)
- **Septic arthritis** (infection of the joints)
- **Osteomyelitis** (infection of the bone)
- **Endocarditis** (infection of the lining of the heart)
- **Meningitis** (inflammation of the membranes surrounding the brain or spinal cord)

It is not known how long it takes for symptoms to develop after someone is exposed to kingella kingae. During outbreaks in child care centers, severe illness in children usually develops within a one-month time period.

Diagnosis

Laboratory tests can be used to diagnose infections. Consult a health care provider if you are uncertain about a kingella kingae infection.

Prevention

- **Practice good hand washing**
- **Perform respiratory etiquette**
- **Clean** toys, tables, and other surfaces
- **Treat close contacts** during outbreaks in child care centers, to reduce the number of children who are colonized with kingella kingae and prevent additional infections.
- Contact public health regarding treatment decisions during outbreaks.

Treatment

A health care provider can prescribe antibiotic medications to treat the infection. During outbreaks in child care centers, antibiotics may be recommended to reduce the number of children who have the bacteria in their throats but do not have any illness.

For more information about the treatment of kingella kingae contact your health care provider.

Exclusion Guidance

Individuals with kingella kingae should not be excluded from work, school, or child care unless the [general exclusions apply](#).

For additional information about kingella kingae, contact North Dakota Health and Human Services' Division of Public Health at 800.427.2180.

Resources:

1. Yagupsky, P (2014). Emerging Infectious Diseases. Outbreaks of Kingella kingae Infections in Daycare Facilities. 2014; 20(5): 746-753.
2. Yagupsky P (2015). Kingella kingae: Carriage, Transmission, and Disease. Clinical Microbiology Reviews. 2015; 28(1):54-79. doi:10.1128/CMR.00028-14.
3. Yagupsky, P, et. Al (2016). The Journal of Pediatrics. Outbreaks of Invasive Kingella kingae Infections in Daycare Facilities: Approach to Investigation and Management. 2015; 128: 14-20.

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