

# Priority Topic: MENINGITIS

## Key Features:

Also covered under **Priority Topics Fever and Headache**

**Best Overview:** [Aseptic and Bacterial Meningitis AAFP 2017](#)

1. In the patient with a non-specific febrile illness, [look for meningitis](#), especially in patients at [higher risk](#) (e.g., immunocompromised individuals, alcoholism, recent neurosurgery, head injury, recent abdominal surgery, neonates, aboriginal groups, students living in residence).

### *What you should study:*

- **Pay attention to High Risk Groups listed in the Key Feature**
- **Always include meningitis in the Ddx of a patient with Fever or Headache**
- ✓ [Jolt Maneuver for Meningitis BMC 2017](#)
- ✓ [CanadiEM Physical Exam for Meningitis](#)  
- **Excellent and surprising article on different exam maneuvers!**

2. When meningitis is suspected ensure a [timely lumbar puncture](#).

### *What you should study:*

- ✓ [Aseptic and Bacterial Meningitis AAFP 2017](#)  
— **know which patients require CT prior to LP**

3. In the differentiation between viral and bacterial meningitis, adjust the [interpretation of the data](#) in light of [recent antibiotic use](#).

**Know how to interpret CSF results under various circumstances:**

- **treatment already started vs. no antibiotics**
- **immunosuppressed vs. immunocompetent**

***What you should study:***

- ✓ [Aseptic and Bacterial Meningitis AAFP 2017](#)
- ✓ [Meningite Bacterienne ou Virale? MduQ 2016](#)

4. For suspected bacterial meningitis, initiate [urgent empiric IV antibiotic therapy](#) (i.e., even before investigations are complete).

***What you should study:***

- ✓ [Aseptic and Bacterial Meningitis AAFP 2017](#) **See Table 2, know by age group**
- ✓ [Bacterial Meningitis IDSA Guidelines 2004](#) **(under review to be updated)**

5. [Contact public health](#) to ensure appropriate [prophylaxis](#) for family, friends and other contacts of each person with meningitis.

**Also, know what to do for PEDS:**

- ✓ [CPS Statement on Bacterial Meningitis in Children >1 month](#)