

## Haemophilus influenzae B

This bacterial infection can cause pneumonia, meningitis leading to death, sepsis, epiglottitis, septic arthritis, cellulitis, otitis media, purulent pericarditis, and other less common yet serious infections. Children who have invasive disease may develop long term hearing loss or neurologic complications. The natural habitat for this bacteria is in the upper respiratory tract with the common mode of transmission person-to-person by inhalation of respiratory droplets or by direct contact with respiratory tract secretions (for example, a child with a runny nose).

Prior to the development of the vaccine 1988, asymptomatic colonization of type B haemophilus in the nasal pharyngeal tract was noted in 2 to 5% of healthy children. Prior to the development of this vaccine, this was the number one cause of bacterial meningitis in U.S. children with the peak incidence of age between 6 and 18 months. Since this vaccine was developed in 1988, the incidence invasive Hib disease in infants and young children have decreased by 99% to fewer than one case per 100,000 children less than 5 years of age.

Adverse reactions to this vaccine are few and include mild pain, redness and swelling at the injection site in 25% of children, lasting less than 24 hours.