

UI student has bacterial meningitis

Antibiotics to be given to students who had contact with patient

Elizabeth Rudd/Lewiston Tribune

MOSCOW - University of Idaho administrators are taking preventative actions today after one student was diagnosed with bacterial meningitis Wednesday.

UI Dean of Students Bruce Pitman said university officials were provided preliminary information about the student's condition Tuesday and the diagnosis was confirmed Wednesday morning. Pitman said the student, who is not being identified, was doing well given the situation.

Bacterial meningitis is an infection around the brain and spinal cord that typically results from a meningococcal disease that is caused by bacteria, according to the Public Health - Idaho North Central District website.

Moscow Family Medicine will be on campus today to provide antibiotics to students in the same living group with the student or who came in contact with the man, Pitman said. The university met with the students to describe the symptoms, answer questions and ask for help in locating friends of the student.

Pitman said UI also sent out a campus alert Wednesday evening to notify students of the situation and the symptoms. Symptoms of meningococcal infections include fever, severe headache, chills, stiff neck, confusion, nausea, vomiting, joint or muscle pain and a red or purple rash.

Students are encouraged to seek medical help as quickly as possible if they do develop any of the symptoms, Pitman said. He also recommended students wash their hands, get plenty of sleep, cough into their sleeves and avoid classes if they are sick in an effort to curb the spread of sicknesses.

"When students get sick, it causes them - typically - a great deal of difficulty academically," Pitman said.

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