Meningitis and Septicaemia are very dangerous and can come on very quickly.

**What is the risk to my baby?**
Most babies have natural resistance to these diseases. Meningitis vaccines give excellent protection but can’t prevent all forms of meningitis and septicaemia.

**What should I watch out for?**
Watch out for the symptoms shown on this card.

Early symptoms of meningitis and septicaemia (the blood poisoning form of the disease) can be like other childhood illnesses, but a baby will usually get ill quickly and get worse fast.

Watch out for tiny red or brown pin prick marks which can change into purple blotches or blood blisters. If your baby gets a rash, do the ‘Tumbler Test’.

This rash can be harder to see on dark skin, so check for spots over baby’s whole body, especially on paler areas like palms of the hands, the soles of the feet, on the tummy, inside the eyelids, and on the roof of the mouth.

**What should I do if I am worried about my baby?**
Trust your instincts. If you think your baby has meningitis or septicaemia get medical help immediately. Say that you are worried it could be meningitis or septicaemia.

**Rash on white skin**

**Tumbler Test**
If a glass tumbler is pressed firmly against a septicaemic rash, the marks will not fade. You will be able to see them through the glass. If this happens get medical help immediately. Remember, a very ill baby needs medical help even if they have only a few spots, a rash that fades or no rash at all.

Meningitis Research Foundation’s vision is a world free from meningitis and septicaemia. Call us to find out how you can help.

Midland Way Thornbury Bristol BS35 2BS Tel 01454 281811
28 Alva Street Edinburgh EH2 4PY Tel 0131 510 2345
71 Botanic Avenue Belfast BT7 1JL Tel 028 9032 1283
63 Lower Gardiner Street Dublin 1 Tel 01 819 6931

www.meningitis.org
A charity registered in England and Wales no 1091105, in Scotland no SC037586 & in Ireland CHY 12030
Registered Office: Midland Way Thornbury Bristol BS35 2BS
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Meningitis Baby Watch

Is your baby getting worse fast? Babies can get ill very quickly, so check often.

- Tense or bulging soft spot
- High temperature
- Very sleepy/staring expression/too sleepy to wake up
- Breathing fast/difficulty breathing
- Extreme shivering
- ‘Pin prick’ rash/marks or purple bruises anywhere on the body
- Sometimes diarrhoea
- Vomiting/refusing to feed
- Irritable when picked up, with a high pitched or moaning cry
- Blotchy skin, getting paler or turning blue
- A stiff body with jerky movements, or else floppy and lifeless
- Pain/irritability from muscle aches or severe limb/joint pain
- Cold hands and feet

Not every baby gets all these symptoms. Symptoms can appear in any order.

For more information about meningitis and septicaemia, and information about symptoms in older children and adults, call Meningitis Research Foundation’s Freefone 24 hour helpline
080 8800 3344 (UK)
1800 41 33 44 (Republic of Ireland)