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COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

Press Release

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Meningitis alert in Craig

Residents are encouraged to be aware of symptoms

ANCHORAGE — Public health nurses in Craig have reported a confirmed case of bacterial meningococcal infection in a Craig teenager. The youth was hospitalized on Sunday, May 1, 2011, and has since improved due to rapid diagnosis and treatment.

Rapid response to the reported infection allowed SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC) employees, state public health nurses, the Alaska Section of Epidemiology, and PeaceHealth employees to notify and treat more than 35 close contacts of the patient with a preventive course of antibiotics within 24 hours.

Symptoms of meningococcal infection include: fever, severe sudden headache, nausea, vomiting, stiff neck, pain in the shoulders and back, and a red pinpoint rash. High fever and irritability are signs in a very young child. Symptoms may appear within one to 10 days, but usually appear within three to four days of exposure.

Certain antibiotics are very effective in the treatment of the disease.

Anyone experiencing these symptoms should seek immediate care at one of the three major clinics on Prince of Wales Island:

SEARHC clinic/Alicia Roberts Medical Center: 755-4800

PeaceHealth Clinic: 826-3257

Craig Public Health Center: 826-3433

For more information on meningitis go to: <http://www.cdc.gov/meningitis/index.html>.

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