

**CITY OF BALTIMORE**

MARTIN O'MALLEY, Mayor



**HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

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*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

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## **HEALTH ALERT**

### **Kindergarten Instructional Assistant Dies of Presumed Meningitis; Health Department Recommends Antibiotics for Pre-K and Kindergarten Children at Lockerman Bundy Elementary School**

**BALTIMORE, MD (December 29, 2006)**— After the tragic death of an instructional assistant this afternoon from presumed infectious meningitis, the Baltimore City Health Department is advising that students in the pre-K and kindergarten classes at Lockerman Bundy Elementary School receive antibiotics to prevent illness.

The instructional assistant, Eboni Brooks, died today at the University of Maryland Medical Center. Tests strongly suggest she was infected with the meningococcus bacteria. This bacteria is infectious, but not easily transmitted. Specifically, the only individuals who need preventive antibiotic treatment are those who have had direct exposure to her secretions, such as saliva, and those who had sustained and continuous face-to-face contact with her for a minimum of four hours since last week.

This evening, the Health Department has reviewed Ms. Brooks' activities during the infectious period with her family, friends, and co-workers. The Health Department has also consulted with experts at the state Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

Based on this review, the Health Department is recommending preventive antibiotic treatment for:

- Ms. Brooks' roommates and a few other close associates,
- Students and the teacher(s) in the kindergarten class at the Lockerman Bundy Elementary School; and
- pre-K students at the Lockerman Bundy Elementary School

The Health Department is working with the Baltimore City Public School System to directly contact all of those who are recommended to receive preventive antibiotic treatment. The Health Department will be providing free antibiotics to all children for whom it is recommended.

Based on the extremely low risk of infection, the Health Department is not recommending preventive antibiotic treatment for other students, staff, or teachers at the school.

Individuals should consider immediate medical assessment and treatment if they are in the groups for recommended antibiotic treatment above and are feeling sick with fever, muscle aches, or other flu-like symptoms.

Individuals who have questions about whether they should receive preventive antibiotic treatment can call 311 or (410) 396-3100 and ask for meningitis staff on call tonight until midnight and tomorrow, Saturday, starting at 6:30 am.

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