

Antimicrobial susceptibility of invasive *Neisseria meningitidis*, 2015

The antimicrobial susceptibility of all 36 viable meningococcal isolates received at ESR from cases of invasive disease in 2015 was tested. Ceftriaxone, ciprofloxacin, penicillin and rifampicin minimum inhibitory concentrations (MICs) were determined by Etest on Mueller-Hinton agar + 5% sheep blood. MICs were interpreted according to the Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute's criteria except that a penicillin MIC of 0.5 mg/L was categorised as reduced susceptibility rather than resistant.¹

58.3% (21/36) of isolates had reduced penicillin susceptibility (MIC \geq 0.12 mg/L):

- 83.3% (5/6) of group Y isolates;
- 59.1% (13/22) of all group B isolates, but none (0/5) of the group B isolates belonging to the NZ B:P1.4 epidemic strain;
- 40.0% (2/5) of group W135 isolates; and
- 33.3% (1/3) of group C isolates.

All isolates were susceptible to ceftriaxone, rifampicin and ciprofloxacin (see table below).

MIC range, MIC₉₀ and resistance among N. meningitidis isolates from invasive disease cases, 2015

Antimicrobial	MIC range (mg/L)	MIC ₉₀ (mg/L)	Percent reduced susceptibility/intermediate	Percent resistance
penicillin	0.016-0.5	0.25	58.3 ¹	0.0
ceftriaxone	<0.002-0.004	<0.002	- ²	0.0
rifampicin	0.004-0.06	0.03	0.0	0.0
ciprofloxacin	0.004-0.008	0.008	0.0	0.0

¹ penicillin MIC \geq 0.12 mg/L

² there is no reduced susceptibility or intermediate category for ceftriaxone

Over the last 10 years there has been a general trend of an increasing proportion of isolates with reduced penicillin susceptibility (see figure below). Infections due to isolates with reduced susceptibility are still treatable with penicillin.

Rifampicin resistance is rare among meningococci from invasive disease in New Zealand. In total, seven rifampicin-resistant isolates have been identified: one group C (C:2a:P1.5-1,10-1) isolate in 2011, one group B (B:4:P1.19,15) isolate and one group C (C:2a:P1.5-1,10-8) isolate in 2009, one group B (B:4:P1.4) isolate in 2003, one group C (C:2b:P1.2) isolate in 1997, one group B (B:15:P1.7,16) isolate in 1992, and one group A isolate in 1986.

¹ Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute. Performance standards for antimicrobial susceptibility testing; twenty-fifth informational supplement. Wayne, USA: CLSI; 2015. CLSI document M100-25.

Ciprofloxacin resistance is also rare among meningococci from invasive disease in New Zealand, with just one ciprofloxacin-resistant isolate having been identified in 2010. This isolate was a group C meningococcus (C:ns:P1.20,23-7).

No resistance to ceftriaxone has been identified among meningococci isolated from cases of invasive disease in New Zealand.

Reduced penicillin susceptibility among N. meningitidis from invasive disease, 2006-2015

