

# Epidemiology and surveillance of meningococcal disease in Latvia (2002-2006)

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State Agency "Public Health Agency"

## Background

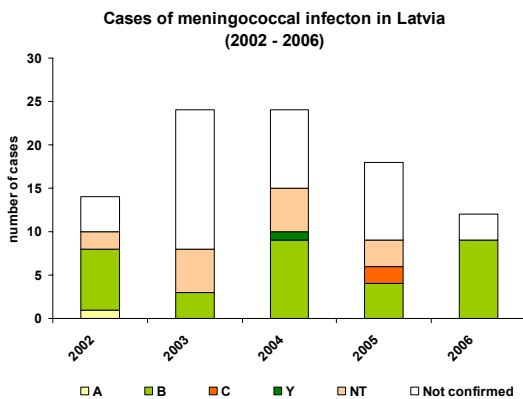
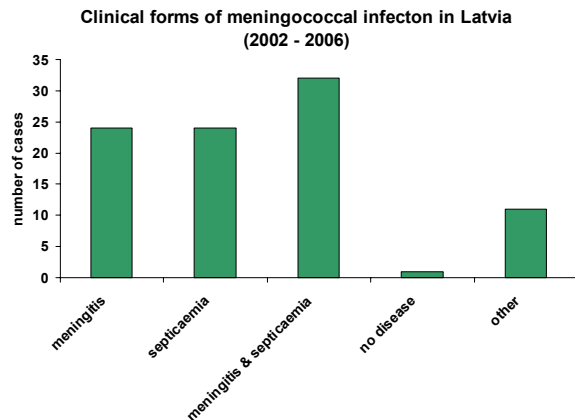
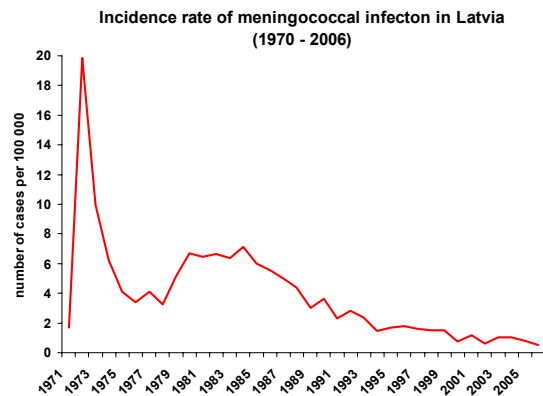
- The first available statistical data on meningococcal disease in Latvia are available from 1953, routinely collected data - from 1970; official statistics produced from 1990.
- State Agency "Public Health Agency" (PHA) is a state institution, responsible for epidemiological surveillance of meningococcal disease cases;
- The laboratory of the State Agency "Infectology Center of Latvia" is the reference laboratory for N meningitidis.

## Methods

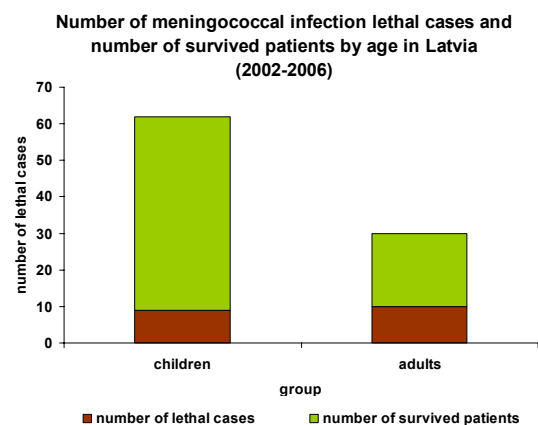
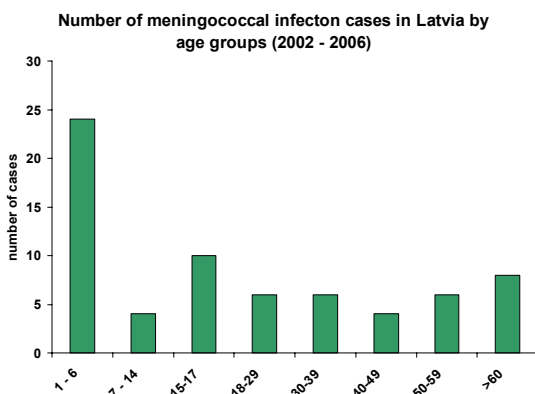
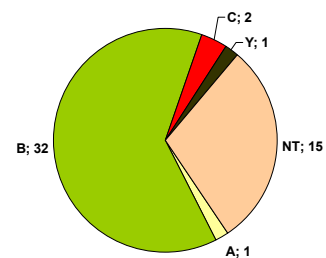
- PHA has 10 regional offices in different areas of Latvia.
- Every case of meningococcal disease is a subject of compulsory notification according to the Order of Cabinet of Ministers. Clinicians in the public and private healthcare sectors as well as microbiological laboratories are legally responsible for notifying the meningococcal disease within 24 hours.
- Clinicians are responsible for case management.
- Epidemiologists in branches of the PHA organise preventive and control measures and investigate cases (outbreaks).
- PHA regularly produces the epidemiological bulletin which is disseminated by email and posted to other ministries, institutions and mass media; and is available in PHA web site.

## Results

- The number of registered cases ranged from 12 (0.57 per 100 000 in 1959) to 478 (19.88 per 100 000 in 1972) during the time period from the beginning of registration till 1989. Since 1990 the decrease in number of cases is observed (maximal number of cases – 97 - registered in 1990, minimal – 12 – in 2006).
- In 2002-2006 92 cases of meningococcal disease were registered in Latvia, including 19 (20%) lethal cases.
- The majority of cases (62) were registered in children age group (under 18).
- The death rate in the age group under 18 is lower than in the older age group (14,5% in age below 18 versus 33,3% in age 18 and older).
- 55% of meningococcal disease cases were confirmed by laboratory.
- The dominant agent is N.Meningitidis B group (63% of laboratory confirmed cases).



**N.Meningitidis serogroups in Latvia (2002 - 2006)**  
(number of confirmed cases - 51 / 55%)



## Conclusions

- In order to enhance the epidemiological surveillance in Latvia there is a necessity to improve laboratory diagnosis for meningococcal disease cases.