

Poster presentation

## Clinical signs of bacterial meningitis at admission

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from Danish Society for Emergency Medicine: Research Symposium 2009  
Copenhagen, Denmark. 26 April 2009

Published: 20 August 2009

*Scandinavian Journal of Trauma, Resuscitation and Emergency Medicine* 2009, **17**(Suppl 2):P13 doi:10.1186/1757-7241-17-S2-P13

This abstract is available from: <http://www.sjtem.com/content/17/S2/P13>

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### Introduction

To identify clinical signs of high sensitivity in adult community acquired bacterial meningitis on the time of admission to a hospital.

### Methods

All adult cases of culture positive cerebrospinal fluids in East Denmark from 2002 to 2004 were included. Medical records were collected retrospectively with 98.4% case completeness.

### Results

132 cases were included. Only 40% had the "typical triad of symptoms" (altered consciousness, fever and nuchal rigidity). 89% had clinically altered consciousness, 77% had fever, 73% had nuchal rigidity, 70% reported headache, 16% reported convulsions prior to admission, 14% had petechiae.

75% had 3 or more of the 6 clinical signs mentioned above.

Petechiae were registered only among meningococcal (n = 11; 61% of cases) or pneumococcal (n = 6; 8% of cases) aetiology.

### Conclusion

"3 out of 6 clinical cardinal symptoms" was more sensitive in detecting community acquired bacterial meningitis than the "typical triad of symptoms".