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## **Passionate Kisses with Several Partners Can Kill**

### *Because of meningitis*

French kisses can kill, and that is not a joke, it's a scientific truth. A team of researchers from the Westmead Children's Hospital found that passionate kisses fourfold the teenagers' risk of meningitis. This disease causes the inflammation of the meninges covering the brain and the spinal cord and it can be triggered by infections, chemical agents and even tumor cells. Meningitis can produce a wide range of symptoms including fever, headache or confusion and in extreme cases, deafness, brain damage, stroke, or even death. "Intimate kissing has been shown to be a risk factor ... and it is likely that intimate kissing with multiple partners increases the risk of transmission," Professor Robert Booy, of Children's Hospital Westmead in Sydney, was quoted by Reuters as saying. "We all carry bacteria in our throats, and some of us will carry the meningococcal bacteria. They don't exist very well outside of the body. But if it can pass in saliva, from one person to the next, then it passes very easily," Professor Booy explained. According to the BBC, around one in 10 teens carry meningococcal bacteria. Researchers interviewed 144 teenagers with ages ranging from 15 to 19 who had been hospitalized in England with meningitis. They were compared with 144 healthy persons. The conclusion was that passionate kisses and a previous infection raised the likelihood of suffering from the illness. The solution offered by the Australian team suggests that teens change their behavior, which is an almost impossible quest.