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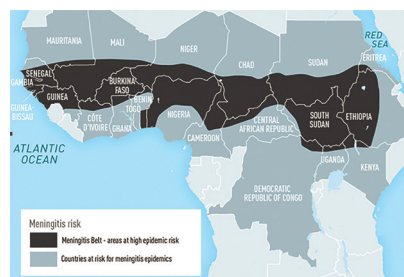
Meningococcal [mə-ning"go-kok'a] Disease

Ronnie Henry

From the Greek *meninx* (“membrane”) + *kokkos* (“berry”), meningococcal disease was first described by Vieusseux during an outbreak in Geneva in 1805. In 1884, Italian pathologists Ettore Marchiafava and Angelo Celli described intracellular micrococci in cerebrospinal fluid, and in 1887, Anton Weichselbaum identified the meningococcus (designated as *Diplococcus intracellularis meningitidis*) in cerebrospinal fluid and established the connection between the organism and epidemic meningitis. Meningococcus can cause endemic cases, clusters, and epidemics of meningitis and septicemia.

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