



**Pacific University  
Student Health Center  
503-352-2269**

## **Meningococcal Vaccine and Disease Information**

### **Meningococcal Disease**

**Meningococcal Meningitis** is a serious, potentially fatal infection that most often causes severe swelling of the tissue around the brain and spinal cord (meningitis) or a serious blood infection (meningococemia). The symptoms of meningococcal meningitis can appear quickly or over several days. Typically they develop within 3-7 days after exposure.

#### **Symptoms may include:**

- Fever
- Headache
- Stiff Neck
- Rash (purpura often appears as flat, dark purple spots on arms, legs, then torso)
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Feeling very drowsy or weak, muscle or joint pain
- Confusion
- Sensitivity to Light

**If you think you have any of these symptoms, call a doctor right away or go to emergency room.**

**Meningococcal meningitis is very serious and can be fatal. In fatal cases, deaths can occur in as little as a few hours and in non-fatal cases permanent disabilities can occur.**

### **How Meningococcal Disease Spreads**

The bacteria spread through the exchange of respiratory secretions during close, direct contact with an infected person for several hours. Other factors that increase risk: first year college students living in residence halls, college students living in group settings (such as fraternities and sororities), military recruits, those who lack a spleen or have certain immune disorders.

### **How to Reduce the Spread of Meningococcal Disease**

- Get vaccinated
- Do not share:
  - ✓ Cups, water bottles, or eating utensils
  - ✓ Toothbrushes
  - ✓ Make-up or lip balm
  - ✓ Cigarettes, e-cigarettes, pipes or hookah
- Do not smoke tobacco or marijuana
- Do not drink from a common punchbowl
- Know that kissing poses a risk
- Cover your cough (coughing and spitting can transmit the bacteria)
- Wash hands often with soap and water or use hand sanitizer

## **Vaccination**

There are vaccines that help provide protection against all serogroups of *Neisseria meningitidis* bacteria that are commonly seen in the United States. Like with any vaccine, meningococcal vaccines are not 100% effective. This means that even if you have been vaccinated there is still a chance you can develop a meningococcal infection.

Vaccine is available at local pharmacies. Pharmacies may need to order the vaccine so it is a good idea to call in advance before you go in. Pharmacies have the ability to bill your insurance if the vaccine is covered.

### **Types of meningococcal vaccine:**

CDC recommendation for Meningococcal Vaccination: There are **two types** of meningococcal vaccines for preteens and teens:

All 11 to 12 year olds **should** be vaccinated with a meningococcal conjugate vaccine (Menactra® or Menveo®), with a booster dose given at 16 years old. This covers most of the meningococcal disease in the world, **Serogroup Types A, B, C, W, and Y**

Teens and young adults (16 through 23 year olds) may also may be vaccinated with another type that covers a different strain of meningitis, **Serogroup B** If they are part of a population identified to be at increased risk because of a serogroup B meningococcal disease outbreak (this is the type of Meningococcal outbreak identified on Oregon campuses) These vaccines are (2 or 3 doses depending on brand), (Bexsero® or Trumenba®)

For the most current vaccine recommendation, please call your medical provider and/or visit:  
[http://www.helppreventdisease.com/adult\\_vaccines/meningococcal-meningitis/index.html](http://www.helppreventdisease.com/adult_vaccines/meningococcal-meningitis/index.html)  
<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/mening/public/adolescent-vaccine.html>