



Resource Materials for Implementation of Meningococcal Immunization
Recommendations for Adolescents and College-bound Students

IMMUNIZER FACTS ON DISEASE AND VACCINE

New CDC Recommendations for Meningococcal Vaccination

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends routine vaccination using a new quadrivalent meningococcal conjugate vaccine:

- At the preadolescent (11-12 year) health care visit, or for those not previously immunized;
- Before high school entry or at 15 years of age, or
- For college freshmen living in dormitories.¹

Epidemiology of Meningococcal Disease

- Sixty-two percent of the annual 1,400 to 2,800 U.S. cases occur in those 11 years and older.
- The disease is caused by a bacterium called *Neisseria meningitidis*. There are serogroups (types) of bacteria, called A, B, C, Y and W-135, that are responsible for most disease worldwide. In the U.S., most cases are caused by types B, C and Y.
 - Currently, type C is most common in adolescents and young adults. Type Y is most common in older persons; type B in infants.
 - The proportion of each type causing illness can change over time.
- Meningococcal bacteria are spread through coughing and sneezing or by direct contact with an infected person (such as kissing).

Clinical Manifestation, Mortality and Morbidity

- Meningitis and blood infection are the most common illnesses associated with meningococcal disease.
- About 10 percent of people infected will die, even with appropriate treatment.
- Up to 19 percent of survivors have permanent damage, such as hearing loss, brain damage, kidney failure and limb amputations.
- The early symptoms of infection might be mild and they often resemble symptoms of less severe infections, such as viral infections.

¹ Recommendations are supported by the American Academy of Family Physicians and American Medical Association. Recommendations have also been issued by the American Academy of Pediatrics, American College Health Association and Society for Adolescent Medicine.

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About the Meningococcal Conjugate Vaccine

- The conjugate vaccine is safe and effective in protecting against four of the five main types of bacteria that cause disease (A, C, Y and W-135). No licensed vaccine is available in the U.S. to protect against type B at this time.
- Up to 83 percent of cases in adolescents and young adults are caused by the four disease-causing types included in the vaccine.
- The vaccine is expected to provide protection for eight years or more.²
- Adverse reactions to vaccination are generally mild and consist mainly of pain and firmness at the injection site, headache, fatigue and malaise.

² Based on CDC model. Has not been confirmed with actual data.