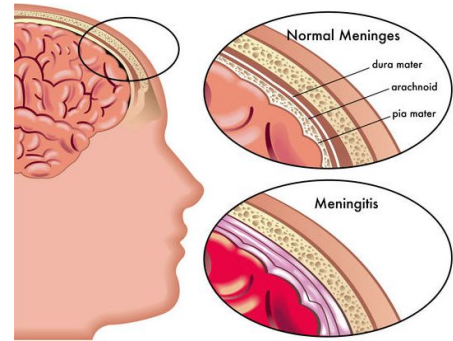


Meningococcal and the Vaccine to Prevent It

What is Meningococcal?

- ★ Meningococcal disease can refer to any illness caused by a type of bacteria called *Neisseria meningitidis*, also known as meningococcus [muh-ning-goh-KOK-us]. Meningococcal disease is not very common in the United States, but teens and young adults are at increased risk.
- ★ The two most common types of infections are
 - Infections of the lining of the brain and spinal cord (meningitis)
 - Infections of the bloodstream
- ★ Symptoms are usually sudden onset of fever, headache, and stiff neck. It can start with symptoms similar to flu, and will often also cause nausea, vomiting, increased sensitivity to light, rash, and confusion.
- ★ Meningococcal meningitis and bloodstream infections can be very serious, even deadly. The infections progress quickly. Someone can go from being healthy to very ill in 48 hours or less. Even if they get treatment, about 10 to 15 out of 100 people with meningococcal disease will die from it. Long-term disabilities from having meningococcal disease include loss of limbs, deafness, nervous system problems, and brain damage.



How do you get Meningococcal Disease?

- ★ Meningococcal bacteria spread through saliva or spit, usually through:
 - Close contact, like when a person who has the bacteria in their nose or throat coughs on or kisses someone
 - Ongoing contact, like living with a person who has the bacteria in their nose or throat (for example, same household, college residence halls, military barracks)

Why does my child need Meningococcal Vaccines?

- ★ Meningococcal vaccines help protect against the bacteria that cause meningococcal disease. Meningococcal disease can refer to any illness caused by a type of bacteria called *Neisseria meningitidis*. Meningococcal disease is not very common in the United States, but teens and young adults are at increased risk.

When should my child be vaccinated?

- ★ All preteens and teens should get 2 doses of the meningococcal conjugate (MenACWY) vaccine. They should get the first dose at ages 11-12 and a booster dose at 16 years old. If your teen hasn't gotten this meningococcal shot, talk to their doctor or nurse about getting it as soon as possible. Teens and young adults (16 through 23 years old) may also get a serogroup B meningococcal (MenB) vaccine (2 doses). The preferred age to get MenB vaccine is 16 through 18 years old. Talk with your teen's doctor or nurse about meningococcal vaccination to help protect your child's health.

Meningococcal Vaccine is safe.

The Meningococcal shots are safe and effective at preventing meningococcal disease. Vaccines like any medication can have side effects. These are usually mild and go away on their own.

What are the side effects?

About half of people who get a MenACWY vaccine have mild [side effects](#) following vaccination:

- Redness or pain where they got the shot
- Fever

These reactions usually get better on their own within 1 to 2 days, but serious reactions are possible.

Following a MenB shot, more than half of people who get the vaccine will have mild problems:

- Soreness, redness, or swelling where you got the shot
- Tiredness (fatigue)
- Headache
- Muscle or joint pain
- Fever or chills
- Nausea or diarrhea

These reactions usually get better on their own within 3 to 5 days, but serious reactions are possible. Note that teens can get both meningococcal vaccines during the same visit but in different arms.

Some preteens and teens might faint after getting a meningococcal vaccine or any other shot.

*****Talk to your child's doctor or nurse about meningococcal vaccines, or visit*****

www.cdc.gov/meningococcal/vaccine-info.html

