

Meningococcal Disease and Vaccination Information Sheet

New Jersey State Law requires colleges to provide incoming students with information about meningitis and vaccinations. It is mandatory that the included meningitis questionnaire is returned to Student Health Services.

The best way to protect yourself/your child is through vaccination. There are currently two types of vaccinations in the U.S. against Meningococcal meningitis.

- Meningitis A,C,Y, W-135 (brand names Menveo or Menactra)
 - Two doses are recommended for all adolescents. The first dose is typically given at 11 or 12 years old. Because the vaccine wanes in effectiveness a **booster is recommended at or after age 16** to provide protection when the adolescent is at highest risk.
- Meningitis B (brand names Bexsero & Trumenba)
 - 2 or 3 shot series for ages 16-23
 - This vaccination is not mandatory yet but there have been recent outbreaks at local college campuses of this strain of meningitis.

NJ State Law (A-1546/S-1655) requires all students living on campus to be vaccinated against **Meningococcal A, C, Y, W-135**. Students must show proof of immunization to Student Health Services in order to reside on campus.

Meningococcal vaccines are safe and effective. Adverse reactions are typically mild and infrequent, including redness or soreness at the injection site or a mild fever. Although rare, serious side effects such as allergic reaction can occur. For more information about meningitis and the vaccine, please contact your primary care physician or the Student Health Center at (609) 896-5060. You can also visit the Center for Disease Control website at cdc.gov/meningococcal/vaccine-info.html

Meningococcal Meningitis

The Disease: meningococcal meningitis is a bacterial infection that often affects otherwise healthy people. Although rare, teens and young adults (ages 16-23) are at increased risk. Meningococcal bacteria can cause severe disease, attacking the brain, spinal cord and bloodstream. If not treated early, meningitis can lead to severe disabilities, even death.

The Symptoms: common symptoms are confusion, fatigue, high fever, headache, stiff neck, sensitivity to light, rash of dark purple spots, nausea and vomiting. Symptoms can mimic flu-like symptoms which can make diagnosis difficult.

Transmission: meningococcal bacteria are spread by direct contact with an infected person's respiratory or throat (saliva or spit) secretions (i.e. coughing or kissing).

Why are college students at increased risk? Dormitory living, kissing, sharing eating utensils, drinks, food, cigarettes, etc.

What is the best way to prevent meningococcal disease? GET VACCINATED!