

## Meningococcal Vaccine 4CMenB (Bexsero®) Fact Sheet

The multicomponent meningococcal, 4CMenB, vaccine, Bexsero®, helps to protect children from an illness called group B invasive meningococcal disease.

### What is invasive meningococcal disease?

- Invasive meningococcal disease (IMD) is a serious contagious infection caused by the bacteria *Neisseria meningitidis*. There are 13 types, but B is the most common IMD group to affect Canadians. It causes 80% of IMD cases under the age of one year.
- It can cause swelling of the lining of the brain and spinal cord, known as meningitis, or a serious infection of the blood, known as meningococcal septicemia. It can be fatal.
- Symptoms start suddenly, from 2 to 10 days after exposure. They include fever, aches, joint pain, severe headache, stiff neck, nausea, vomiting and a red pin-point rash, followed by drowsiness, confusion or agitation.
- It spreads to others through close face-to-face contact with an infected person's saliva or secretions (fluids) from the nose and throat. Examples of close contact include sneezing and coughing, and activities such as kissing and sharing food, drinks, toothbrushes, toys or cigarettes.
- IMD is most common in children, under the age of five, and adolescents.
- It occurs more often in the winter and spring in Canada (temperate climate) and during the dry season in tropical climates, e.g. December to June in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Early treatment with antibiotics is important.

### Who should get the publicly funded (free) Bexsero®?

Publicly funded Bexsero® is available for

- children 2 months to 17 years of age with certain medical conditions
- close contacts of a case of serogroup B IMD or those at risk during an outbreak
- children from 2 months through 17 years of age with the following high risk conditions:
  - functional or anatomic asplenia
  - complement, properdin, factor D or primary antibody deficiencies
  - cochlear implant recipients (pre / post implant)
  - individuals with acquired complement deficiencies (e.g., receiving eculizumab)
  - individuals with HIV

Age at first dose	# of doses	Schedule
2 to 5 months	3* + 1	0, 2, 4, 6 months & booster 12 to 24 months (earlier the better)
6 to 11 months	3*	0, 2, 4 months and at age ≥ 12 months
12 months to 10 years	2*	0, 2 months
11 to 17 years	2	0, 2 months (at least one month between doses)

\*At least 2 months between doses is preferred.

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## Who should not get Bexsero®?

- Anyone who has had a serious allergic reaction to this vaccine in the past, or to any component of the vaccine:
  - **Bexsero®** - N. Meningitidis group B fusion protein, produced in *E. coli* (then inactivated), aluminum hydroxide, Neissaria heparin binding agent (NHBA), sodium chloride, histidine, sucrose, **kanamycin** used early on in process and removed – trace level only  
**May contain latex** (cap of syringe)
- Anyone with a high fever, moderate to severe illness should wait until they feel well.
- Pregnant or breastfeeding women should only be vaccinated if it is clearly necessary.

## What are the common side effects of Bexsero®?

- Some people may feel feverish, sore and swollen for a few days where the needle was given and have general muscle aches, headaches or feel tired for a day or two.
- To reduce the chance of discomfort or fever after immunization, it may be best for infants and children less than 2 years of age to
  - be given Tylenol® **at the time of or shortly after immunization**
  - **not** receive other immunizations at the same time as Bexsero®
- Children under 19 years of age must **not** be given ASA, Aspirin® or salicylates.

## What else do I need to know?

- To avoid germs, do not share water bottles or other drinks, food or eating utensils, toothbrushes or mouth guards, etc., and encourage your children to do the same.
- To reduce the spread of germs, sneeze or cough into a tissue or into your elbow or upper sleeve, and wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 15 seconds.

## When should I seek medical attention after immunization?

- If your child experiences any unusual side effects, seek medical attention and notify us.
- Go to Emergency at a hospital right away or call 911 if your child has any of the following after immunization:
  - swelling of the face and neck
  - problems breathing
  - hives and itchy, reddened skin

## Your Record of Protection

After you receive any immunization, make sure your health care provider updates your personal immunization record. Keep it in a safe place. Please inform us of any immunizations not received from public health.

## Other Questions?

Talk to your health care provider or call our Immunization Program at 613-966-5500  
Toll Free 1-800-267-2803 | TTY Dial 711 (1-800-267-6511) | [www.hpepublichealth.ca](http://www.hpepublichealth.ca)

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