

Meningococcal Conjugate Vaccine (Men-C-C) Fact Sheet

The meningococcal conjugate (Men-C-C) vaccine helps protect almost all children and adults from an illness called 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 group C is responsible for up to half of all IMD cases in Canada and almost all of the outbreaks in schools and communities.
- 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 or toys.
- 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 in 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) meningococcal conjugate vaccine?

- It is recommended for routine immunization of infants at 12 months of age, even if they received the vaccine as an infant.
- It is recommended for children 12 months to 11 years of age if they have not previously been vaccinated.
- Catch-up schedule for children born on or after September 1, 2003 and 1 yr of age or over.
- Unimmunized adults born between January 1, 1986 and December 31, 1996.

Who should not get the meningococcal conjugate vaccine?

- Anyone who has had a serious allergic reaction to this vaccine in the past, or to any component of the vaccine:
 - **Menjugate®** - meningococcal C oligosaccharide, aluminium hydroxide, sodium chloride, mannitol, sodium phosphate, disodium phosphate heptahydrate, **diphtheria** CRM197 protein **Does contain latex** (vial stopper and syringe tip)
 - **NeisVac-C®** - neisseria meningitidis C polysaccharide, aluminum hydroxide, **tetanus** toxoid, sodium chloride **Does contain latex** (cap & plunger stopper)
- 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.

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What are the common side effects of meningococcal conjugate vaccine?

- Some people may feel sore and swollen for a few days where the needle was given and have general muscle aches, headaches, fever and/or feel tired for a day or two.
- Tylenol® or ibuprofen may be taken afterwards, as directed, to reduce discomfort or fever.
- **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 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.
- A booster dose is not thought to be necessary at this time.
- The Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 requires all children entering daycare to provide proof of immunization, according to the Publicly Funded Immunization Schedule for Ontario.
- The Immunization of School Pupils Act requires all students between the ages of 4 to 17 to be immunized according to Ontario's Immunization Schedule, unless a valid Statement of Medical Exemption or Conscience or Religious Belief is on file with public health.

When should I seek medical attention after immunization?

- If you or 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 you or 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

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