

Meningococcal Conjugate A, C, Y and W-135 Vaccine

Vaccines have saved more lives than any other medical intervention. They help the immune system recognize and fight bacteria and viruses that cause serious diseases.

Most meningococcal diseases can be prevented through immunization.

- Meningococcal disease is a serious and life-threatening illness caused by bacteria called *Neisseria meningitidis*.
- These bacteria can cause meningitis (infection of the lining around the brain) and septicemia (blood infection).
- Meningococcal disease can lead to severe complications such as amputations of fingers, toes, arms or legs, permanent hearing loss, brain damage, seizures and death.
- Although meningococcal disease can occur at any age, infants, children, adolescents, and older adults are at higher risk.

How does meningococcal bacteria spread?

- The bacteria spread through **close contact**, such as coughing or sneezing, close face-to-face contact, kissing, or by sharing drinks, food or utensils.
- Some people carry the bacteria in their nose or throat without feeling sick but can still spread it.

What are symptoms of meningococcal disease?

Symptoms usually begin **within a few days** of contact with the bacteria and can worsen very quickly. They may include:

- fever, severe headache, stiff neck, joint pain, nausea or vomiting, and sensitivity to light.
- A reddish-purple, bruise-like rash and reduced alertness may appear soon after. In severe cases, blood pressure can drop dangerously low within **24 hours**.
- **Seek medical care right away** if you or your child has these symptoms. People who receive appropriate antibiotic treatment are generally no longer contagious after 24 hours.

How to prevent meningococcal disease?

- **Get immunized** to protect yourself and others.
- Wash your hands often.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.
- Do not share items that touch the mouth, such as food, drinks, cigarettes, straws, water bottles, musical instrument mouthpieces, lip products, mouth guards, baby bottles, soothers or toys.
- This vaccine protects against four meningococcal bacteria serotypes: A, C, Y and W-135. It does not protect against serotypes B or X.

Who can get this vaccine for free?

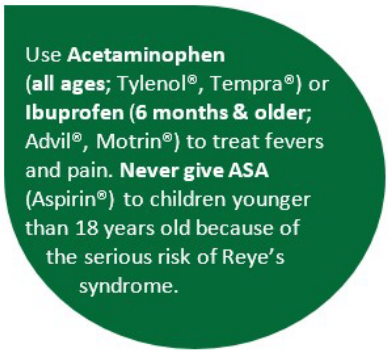
- Children at **1 year of age** and **Grade 8 students** as part of the routine immunization program.
- Individuals younger than **22 years of age** who did not receive the routine school immunization.
- People **6 weeks of age and older** who are close contacts of someone with meningococcal A, C, Y or W-135 disease.
- People **6 weeks of age and older** with certain medical conditions, including:
 - No spleen, a spleen that doesn't work properly or sickle cell disease.
 - Acquired complement deficiency.
 - Congenital immune system disorder (including complement, properdin, factor D deficiency, primary antibody deficiencies).
 - Solid organ transplant candidates or recipients.
 - Islet cell transplant candidates or recipients.
 - Hematopoietic stem cell transplant.
 - Cochlear implant recipients or those awaiting an implant.
 - Cerebrospinal fluid leak or hydrocephaly.
 - Children living with HIV.

Who should not get meningococcal vaccine?

- You should wait to get the vaccine if you are feeling very sick, with or without a fever.
- You should not get this vaccine if you have ever had a serious or life-threatening reaction to a previous meningococcal vaccine or any ingredient of the vaccine.

What are common reactions to meningococcal vaccine?

- **Vaccines are very safe and effective. It is much safer to get the vaccine than to get meningococcal disease.**
- Temporary pain, redness or swelling at the injection site.
- Headache, tiredness, diarrhea, irritability, loss of appetite or fever.
- These reactions are usually mild and go away within 1 to 2 days.
- Treat a fever only (at least 6 to 8 hours after immunization) if you or your child is uncomfortable, not drinking fluids or having trouble sleeping.



Use **Acetaminophen** (all ages; Tylenol®, Tempra®) or **Ibuprofen** (6 months & older; Advil®, Motrin®) to treat fevers and pain. **Never give ASA** (Aspirin®) to children younger than 18 years old because of the serious risk of Reye's syndrome.

Stay at the clinic for 15 minutes after vaccination. In very rare cases, a serious allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) can occur. This may include hives, difficulty breathing or swelling of the throat, tongue or lips. This reaction is extremely rare (less than 1 in 1 million people) and can be treated. **If these symptoms happen after you leave the clinic, get medical help right away or call 911.**

Who should you report reactions to?

- Report any unexpected or serious reactions to your local public health nurse, doctor, nurse practitioner or HealthLine 811 as soon as possible.

Talk to a public health nurse if:

- You have questions or concerns; or
- You or your child needed medical care from a doctor, hospital or health centre for a symptom that might be related to a vaccine.

What does meningococcal vaccine contain?

NIMENRIX™ contains *Neisseria meningitidis* serogroup A polysaccharide, *Neisseria meningitidis* serogroup C polysaccharide, *Neisseria meningitidis* serogroup W-135 polysaccharide, *Neisseria meningitidis* serogroup Y polysaccharide, sucrose, trometamol, sodium chloride, water for injection. Thimerosal-free, preservative-free and latex-free. Contains no adjuvants.

MenQuadfi® contains meningococcal A, C, Y and W-135 polysaccharides, sodium chloride, sodium acetate, water for injection. Thimerosal-free, preservative-free and latex-free. Contains no adjuvants.

Menveo™ contains meningococcal A, C, Y and W-135 oligosaccharides, diphtheria CRM197 protein, potassium dihydrogen phosphate, sodium chloride, sodium dihydrogen phosphate monohydrate, disodium hydrogen phosphate bihydrate, sucrose, water for injection. Thimerosal-free, preservative-free and latex-free. Contains no adjuvants.

Mature Minor Consent

It is recommended that parents/guardians discuss consent for immunization with their children. Efforts are first made to get parental/guardian consent for immunizations. However, children at least 13 years of age up to and including 17 years of age, who can understand the benefits and possible reactions for each vaccine and the risks of not getting immunized, can legally consent to or refuse immunizations in Saskatchewan by providing mature minor informed consent to a healthcare provider.

Provincial immunization fact sheets are available at saskatchewan.ca/immunize.

Resources: [Canadian Immunization Guide](#), product monographs.