

Meningococcal Disease

What you should know

What is it?

Meningococcal disease is a life-threatening bacterial infection of the brain and spinal cord.



What are the symptoms?

- High fever.
- Headache.
- Nausea and vomiting.
- Stiff neck.
- Confusion.
- Rash.



Have these symptoms? Call a healthcare provider right away!

How does it spread?

Meningococcal disease spreads through mucus and saliva, like when an infected person coughs, sneezes, kisses, or shares drinks or utensils.

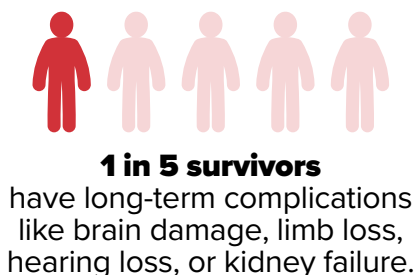
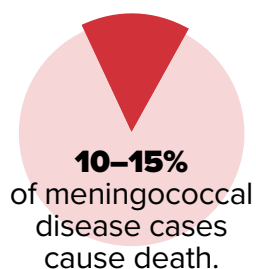


Who is at higher risk?

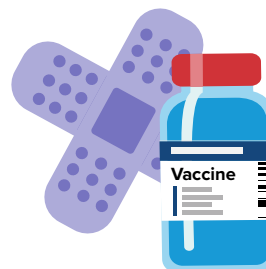
- Infants and young children.
- Teens and young adults, especially in dorms or close living.
- People with weakened immune systems.
- Travelers to high-risk areas.
- People who have close contact with an infected person.



What complications can occur?



How can I prevent it?



Getting
meningococcal
vaccine is the
best protection.

Meningococcal Vaccine

Frequently asked questions

Is it safe?

All vaccines are rigorously tested before approval. Scientists then use multiple systems to track vaccine safety. Millions of doses of meningococcal vaccine have been safely given worldwide.

What are the side effects?

Severe reactions, like an allergic reaction, are rare. Common side effects are mild and usually last 1–2 days. They include pain, redness, swelling at the injection site, fever, muscle pain, headache, and fatigue.

How effective is it?

MenACWY vaccine is up to 85% effective against meningitis A, C, W, and Y bacteria. MenB vaccine is up to 88% effective against meningitis B bacteria.

Who should get it?

All preteens and teens.

- 11–12-year-olds should get MenACWY vaccine, with a booster dose at 16 years old.
- Teens, preferably 16–18 years old, may get MenB vaccine—especially if they'll live in college dorms. People at high risk may also get it. Talk to your doctor.
- Teens who need both MenACWY and MenB vaccines can receive a combo vaccine, if available.
- Infants and young children at increased risk may need vaccine.

Should college students get it?

Yes. MenACWY vaccine is recommended for college students in dorms—especially if they haven't received a dose since turning 16 or it's been 5 or more years since their last dose. College students 16–23 years old may also choose to get MenB to protect against meningitis B bacteria, the most common cause of campus outbreaks. Many colleges require MenACWY for enrollment—and some also require MenB.

Who shouldn't get it?

People who have had a serious allergic reaction to a previous dose or a component of the vaccine.

Where can I learn more?

Visit meningitisprevention.org or healthychildren.org or talk to your healthcare provider or your child's pediatrician to learn more.

Where can I or my child get vaccinated?

At a healthcare provider's office or pharmacy. Find free vaccines at tpchd.org/kidsvax. Adults 19 years or older should talk to their provider or pharmacist.