

MENINGOCOCCAL MENINGITIS FACT SHEET

WHAT IS MENINGOCOCCAL MENINGITIS? Meningococcal disease is CAUSED BY BACTERIA CALLED Neisseria meningitides. It can lead to severe blood infections. When the linings of the brain and spinal cord become infected, it is called meningitis. The disease strikes quickly and can have serious complications, including death.

Anyone can get meningococcal disease. Some people are at higher risk. This disease occurs more often in people who are: Living in crowded settings, such as college dormitories or military barracks, Teenagers/Young Adults, Infants younger than one year of age, Traveling to areas outside of the US, such as the 'meningitis belt' in Africa, living with a damaged spleen / have no spleen or have sickle cell disease, being treated with the medication Soliris® or who have an inherited immune disorder, or exposed during an outbreak.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS? Symptoms appear suddenly, usually 3 to 4 days after a person is infected. It can take up to 10 days to develop symptoms. Symptoms may include: A sudden high fever, headache, stiff neck (meningitis), nausea and vomiting, red-purple skin rash, weakness, and feeling very ill, and eyes sensitive to light.

HOW IS THE MENINGOCOCCUS DISEASE SPREAD? It spreads from person to person by coughing or coming into close or lengthy contact with someone sick or carrying the bacteria. Contact includes kissing, sharing drinks, or living together. Up to one in 10 people carry the meningococcal bacteria in their nose or throat without getting sick.

IS THERE TREATMENT? Early diagnosis of meningococcal disease is very important! If it is caught early, meningococcal disease can be treated with antibiotics. But, sometimes the infection has caused too much damage for antibiotics to prevent death or serious long-term problems. Most people need to be cared for in a hospital due to serious, life-threatening infections.

WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO PREVENT MENINGOCOCCAL DISEASE? The single best way to prevent this disease is to be vaccinated. Vaccines are available for people 6 weeks of age and older. Various vaccines offer protection against the five major strains of bacteria that cause meningococcal disease.

ALL teenagers should receive two doses of vaccine against strains A, C, W, and Y, also known as MenACWY or MCV4 (Menactra) vaccine. The 1st dose is given at 11 – 12 years of age, and the 2nd dose (booster) at 16 years. * It is very important that teens receive the booster dose at 16 years to protect them when they are at the greatest risk of meningococcal disease. Teens and young adults can also be vaccinated against the "B" strain, also known as the MenB vaccine.

WHO SHOULD NOT BE VACCINATED? If you have severe allergies, or if you have had a severe allergic reaction to a previous dose of the meningococcal vaccine. Anyone who has a severe allergy to any component in the vaccine. Anyone who is moderately or severely ill at the time the shot is scheduled should wait until they are better.

WHAT ARE THE MENINGOCOCCAL VACCINE REQUIREMENTS FOR COLLEGE ATTENDANCE? New York State Public Health Law #2167 requires that all college and university students enrolled for at least six (6) semester hours or the equivalent per semester must receive this fact sheet along with the attached Meningitis Response form. ***The Meningitis Response Form is required to be completed and turned in along with their immunization records.***

The meningococcal vaccine is not a required vaccine for SUNY Sullivan. However, it is recommended.

SUNY SULLIVAN MENINGOCOCCAL VACCINATION RESPONSE FORM

New York State Public Health Law requires that all college and university students enrolled for at least six (6) semester hours or the equivalent per semester, or at least four (4) semester hours per quarter, complete and return this form to one of the following:

- **Email** – healthservices@sunysullivan.edu
- **Fax** – (845) 434-3628
- **Mail to:**
SUNY Sullivan – Health Services
112 College Road
Loch Sheldrake, NY 12759

Check one box and sign below.

I have/My child has (for students under the age of 18):

- ☐ Had meningococcal immunization **within the past 5 years**. **The vaccine record is attached.**

[Note: **The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommends that all first-year college students up to age 21 years should have at least 1 dose of Meningococcal ACWY vaccine not more than 5 years before enrollment, preferably on or after their 16th birthday, and that young adults aged 16 through 23 years may choose to receive the Meningococcal B vaccine series. College and university students should discuss the Meningococcal B vaccine with a healthcare provider.]

- ☐ Read, or have had explained to me, the information regarding meningococcal disease. I (my child) will obtain immunization against meningococcal disease **within 30 days** from my private health care provider.

- ☐ Read, or have had explained to me, the information regarding meningococcal disease. I understand the risks of not receiving the vaccine. I have decided that I (my child) **will not obtain immunization** against meningococcal disease.

Student Signature: _____
(Parent/Guardian Signature if student is under 18)

Date: _____

Print Student Name: _____

Student Date of Birth: ____/____/____

Student Email: _____

Student ID#: _____

Student Mailing Address: _____

Student Phone Number: _____

Please turn this page over for more important information.