

What are the two types of meningococcal vaccine?



There are two types of meningococcal vaccine available. Meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV4) is currently preferred because it provides longer lasting immunity and can be used for all recommended groups. Meningococcal polysaccharide vaccine (MPSV4) was used before 2005 and can still be used for high-risk children ages 2-10 years.

The vaccines are 90% effective in protecting against four of the most common strains of meningococcal disease.

Both vaccines do not contain live germs, so they cannot make you sick.



Do I need the meningococcal vaccine to attend school in New Jersey?

Yes. According to New Jersey school requirements, starting in September 2008, all incoming *sixth graders* (11 years old and up) are required to get a meningococcal vaccine.

Previously unvaccinated, incoming college students residing at a four-year college or university are required to get a meningococcal vaccine.

What are the side effects of vaccination?

Meningococcal vaccines are safe and effective. Minor reactions include:

- Pain and redness at the injection site
- A mild fever, which typically lasts for one to two days

Severe side effects, such as a serious allergic reaction, are very rare.

Where can I get more information about meningococcal disease?

- Your health care provider
- Your local health department
- NJDHSS Vaccine Preventable Disease Program website, <http://www.nj.gov/health/cd/vpdphome.htm>
- Vaccine Information Statement, <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/downloads/vis-mening.pdf>



Meningococcal vaccine can protect YOUR child and others against this deadly infection.

This information is intended for educational purposes only and is not intended to replace consultation with a health care professional. 07/08

Preventing Meningococcal Disease



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What is meningococcal disease?

Meningococcal disease is a severe infection of the blood or the meninges (the covering of the brain and spinal cord). It is caused by a bacterium (germ) called *Neisseria meningitidis*.



About 5 to 20% of people carry these germs in their noses and throats and do not get sick from them. In rare cases the germs may get into the blood or the tissue surrounding the spine and brain and cause severe illness.



Who gets meningococcal disease?

Meningococcal disease is most common in babies, but teens and young adults are also at risk. College students

and military recruits are slightly more likely to get the disease because of time spent in crowded living conditions like dorms or barracks.

How do people get meningococcal disease?

The germs are spread from person to person through saliva (spit) or mucus. You must be in **close contact**

with a sick person's secretions in order for the germs to spread.



Close contact includes:

- Living in the same household
- Kissing
- Sharing eating utensils, food or drink
- Uncovered face-to-face sneezing or coughing



What are the symptoms of meningococcal disease?

Early symptoms include:

- Fever
- Headache
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Feeling very tired or sleepy
- Stiff neck
- Confusion

Later in the illness, a rash appearing as red spots or purple blotches on the arms, legs or torso may be seen.

Why should I be concerned about meningococcal disease?

The disease is rare but very serious. Over 10% of people who get meningococcal disease die, and about 20% of survivors are left with permanent disabilities.

How can meningococcal disease be prevented?

Getting vaccinated will protect people from meningococcal disease infection.



There are two types of vaccines. The vaccines are 90% effective in protecting against four of the most common strains of meningococcal disease.

Meningococcal vaccine is recommended for:

- All children ages 11-18 years
- Children ages 2-10 years, who are at high-risk for complications from this bacterial infection
- Previously unvaccinated college freshmen living in dormitories and military recruits living in barracks
- Anyone with an immune system disorder
- Anyone with a damaged spleen, or whose spleen has been removed
- Certain groups of people during a meningococcal outbreak