Meningococcal Disease and the Vaccine

What is Meningococcal Disease?
- It is a disease caused by a bacteria that many people carry in their throat or nose without feeling sick.
- It is spread through close, direct contact. Examples are kissing, coughing or sharing things like food, drinks, and musical instruments.
- People become sick when the bacteria gets into the blood and other body fluids.
- This can lead to brain swelling, brain damage and sometimes death in just a few hours.

What is in the vaccine?

What is in the Meningococcal Vaccine?
- Parts of meningococcal bacteria
- Diptheria toxoid
- Sodium chloride
- Sodium phosphate

Where else can these ingredients be found?
- Meningococcal bacteria
- Other childhood vaccines
- Human body, salt
- Laxatives

What is the benefit of getting this vaccine?
- The grade 7 vaccine protects against four types of the bacteria that cause Meningococcal Disease.

Is this vaccine safe?
- Yes!
- Meningococcal C-ACWY (Nimenrix®) has been in use in Ottawa Public Health immunization clinics since 2007.
- In 2016, only 2 serious reactions to Meningococcal C-ACWY occurred in all of Ontario out of ~183,000 doses given.
- You cannot get meningococcal disease from the vaccine

What are the side effects from the vaccine?

Most Common: Redness, pain and/or swelling at the site, especially during the first 24 hours

Less Common: Muscle aches, headache and/or slight fever

Very Rare and Serious: Serious allergic reaction causing; trouble breathing, swelling of the face or mouth, hives

Treatment: Apply ice to the area where you got the vaccine and/or take acetaminophen (e.g. Tylenol®)

How can I protect myself from Meningococcal Disease?
- Get the vaccine.
- A dose of Meningococcal C-ACWY is recommended for all teens on or after 12 years of age even if the child has already received a previous dose of Meningococcal C-ACWY vaccine (Nimenrix®).
- Do not share food, drinks, or utensils.
- Do not share lipstick or toothbrushes.
- Do not share cigarettes.

Compare the risks – the disease or the vaccine?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease Risk</th>
<th>Vaccine Risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swelling of the brain (meningitis) causing hearing loss, stroke or seizures</td>
<td>Sore arm: 6 in 10 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blood infection causing shock and organ failure Other infections of the lungs, joints, bones, heart and skin Death - 1 in 10 severe cases</td>
<td>Headache or feeling tired : 6 in 10 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious reactions are very rare</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I already had a meningococcal vaccine
- You may have already received a meningococcal vaccine (e.g. Men. C or Menjugate®) for infants that protects against one type of the bacteria.
- MenC-ACWY vaccine protects 80% to 85% of teens against disease caused by four types of bacteria.
- If you are unsure whether you are properly protected against meningococcal disease call Ottawa Public Health 613-580-6744 to speak to a nurse.

How can I prepare for the vaccine?
- Talk to your parent or guardian about the vaccine.
- Learn ways to deal with your worry about the vaccination (focus on breathing, look away from needle, count to ten, etc.).
- Eat breakfast and have an extra juice or small snack to avoid fainting (common with growing teens)

For more information please visit: https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/immunization/docs/meningococcal_conjugate_vaccine.pdf

You must have received one dose of this vaccine to attend school. If you choose not to be immunized, your parent or guardian must contact Ottawa Public Health.

04/2021