

OFF TO COLLEGE? YOU DON'T HAVE TIME TO GET SICK.

College life has unique risk factors for vaccine-preventable diseases: close contact in dorms, classrooms, sporting events, public transportation, parties, and other social interactions make these diseases easy to spread. An otherwise healthy student can quickly become ill with a serious infection. Vaccination is your best shot at avoiding certain diseases and related complications.

Talk to your health care provider today about all of your vaccination needs!

Immunization Checklist:

Immunization needs are based on your age, health conditions, occupation and other factors. Ask your health care provider about the vaccines recommended for you.

- Influenza** (annual)
- Meningococcal** (MenACWY and MenB)
- MMR** (measles, mumps, rubella)
- Hepatitis A**
- Hepatitis B**
- HPV** (human papillomavirus)
- Tdap** (tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis)
- Pneumococcal** (PCV13 and PPSV23)

SPOTLIGHT ON DISEASE: MENINGOCOCCAL

Meningococcal (muh-nin-jo-cok-ul) Disease

Meningococcal disease is a serious illness caused by bacteria that can infect the areas around the brain and spinal cord or the bloodstream. Infection can lead to brain damage, lasting disability, or rapid death.

Who is Likely to Get it?

Meningococcal disease is rare but potentially fatal. About one in ten people who get meningococcal disease will die from it even if treated. After infancy, older teens and young adults have the highest rate of meningococcal disease. Community settings are a risk factor: college freshman living in dorms are particularly at risk.

How Does it Spread?

The bacteria are spread from person to person through close contact with respiratory secretions or saliva (for example, coughing or kissing).

Signs and Symptoms

May include sudden onset of a high fever, headache, or stiff neck. It can start with symptoms similar to the flu, and will often also cause nausea, rash, vomiting, increased sensitivity to light, and confusion. Early diagnosis and treatment is very important because meningococcal disease can be fatal within hours or days of getting sick.

How Can I Protect Myself?

Getting vaccinated is the **first** defense against disease. Check with your health care provider about which meningococcal vaccines you need. You can also protect yourself by not sharing items that have touched someone else's mouth, such as cups, eating utensils, bottles, lip balm, and cigarettes.

Adapted from California Department of Health Services, Immunization Branch materials



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Where to go for more information:

- *Your health care provider, student health center, or local health department
- *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov/vaccines
- *MDHHS, Division of Immunization: www.michigan.gov/immunize
- *Alliance for Immunization in Michigan: www.aimtoolkit.org
- *Immunization Action Coalition: www.immunize.org