

YOU DON'T WANT **MENINGITIS** SO READ THIS

Healthy adolescents and young adults may be at risk for meningococcal meningitis



Are you fully
vaccinated against
this serious disease?
Learn more inside.



WHAT IS MENINGOCOCCAL MENINGITIS?

It is a form of invasive meningococcal disease (IMD) that can seriously affect the brain

IMD is caused when bacteria called *Neisseria meningitidis* invade places that bacteria are not usually found, which can lead to meningitis (inflammation of the lining of the brain and spinal cord).

Less commonly, it can also cause sepsis (blood poisoning).

EARLY SYMPTOMS OF IMD ARE OFTEN MILD (AND OFTEN MISTAKEN FOR THOSE OF A BAD COLD OR THE FLU) BUT IMD CAN RAPIDLY PROGRESS TO MORE SEVERE SYMPTOMS – OR EVEN LEAD TO DEATH WITHIN 48 HOURS.

Symptoms include intense headache, fever, nausea and vomiting, light sensitivity, stiff neck, bleeding into skin, and multi-organ failure.

CONSEQUENCES OF IMD INCLUDE:



Death (in about 5–10% of cases):

Usually within 24–48 hours after symptoms appear

Long-term health problems (in up to 1 in 3 survivors):



Brain damage



Hearing loss



Seizures



Digit or limb amputations

It is spread from person to person through close, direct contact such as:

- Sharing food, drinks, utensils, lip balms and cigarettes
- Kissing
- Close-quartered living
- Coughing and sneezing

It can be spread from healthy-looking people, especially adolescents and young adults.

- Up to 30% of people can carry *Neisseria meningitidis* without showing any symptoms (asymptomatic carriers).
- In 2015, adolescents and young adults 15 to 24 were the second most at-risk age group of contracting IMD.
- As invisible threats, asymptomatic carriers are largely responsible for the spread of the bacteria causing meningococcal meningitis.

The risk of meningococcal meningitis can be invisible – prevent it with meningococcal vaccines.



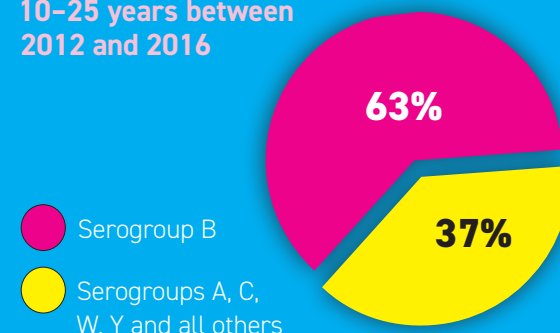
MENINGOCOCCAL MENINGITIS IS VACCINE- PREVENTABLE

Make sure to get immunized against serogroup B and serogroups A, C, W and Y

SEROGROUP B VACCINE

Despite being designed for the most common serogroup that causes meningococcal meningitis, serogroup B vaccines are **NOT PART OF ROUTINE IMMUNIZATION PROGRAMS.**

Proportion of IMD cases in Canadians 10–25 years between 2012 and 2016



Adapted from the Public Health Agency of Canada

SEROGROUP ACWY VACCINE

A primary vaccine against these serogroups is given routinely as part of immunization programs across Canada (except Quebec where it is only against serogroup C) – **but it may be time for a booster dose.**

Booster doses of vaccines are recommended in some situations. Ask your doctor if booster doses are appropriate.

MAKE MENINGOCOCCAL VACCINATION A PRIORITY TOPIC WITH YOUR DOCTOR.



WHO'S AT RISK?

Students and youth activity participants

Meningococcal disease has historically occurred in:

- Schools
- Colleges/universities
- Dormitories/residencies
- Youth camps
- Sport teams
- Other places with large groups of teens and young adults

TRAVELLERS TO AT-RISK AREAS

Meningococcal disease occurs in **all parts of the world** including Australia, Europe, the Americas and the African Meningitis Belt.

- Students attending school abroad are at risk because IMD often occurs in places where teens and young adults gather.

Hajj and Umrah pilgrims visiting Saudi Arabia are also at risk because of the crowded conditions of these religious gatherings.



MENINGOCOCCAL MENINGITIS:

**PREVENTING THE INFECTION
IS BETTER THAN TREATING
THE DISEASE**

Even when treated, 1 in 10 patients
do not survive the first couple of days.

**MENINGOCOCCAL MENINGITIS MAY
BE PREVENTED WITH VACCINES.**

**DON'T TAKE THE RISK – TALK TO
YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT VACCINATING
DURING YOUR NEXT VISIT.**

Need more information? Ask your doctor, or visit

IMMUNIZE.CA or MENINGITIS.CA

As with any vaccine, serogroup B vaccines do not protect 100% of all
those who are vaccinated. These vaccines are not indicated to treat or
reduce complications of invasive meningococcal diseases.

