

**Meningococcal School Immunization Program
 Fact Sheet / Consent Form**

What is meningococcal disease?

Meningococcal disease is an infection of the blood, or lining of the brain and spinal cord (meningitis), caused by the bacteria *Neisseria meningitidis*. There are many different types of *Neisseria* bacteria. Five types, including A, B, C, Y and W-135, cause almost all infections. Meningococcal disease is rare but serious. One in 10 people who are infected can die.

How is the disease spread?

The disease spreads through close face-to-face contact with respiratory and oral secretions (saliva) of an infected person, usually by kissing or sharing food, drinks, musical instruments, water bottles, cigarettes or other things that have been in the mouth of a person with the disease. It is not spread by being in the same classroom or on the same bus with an infected person.

What are the symptoms of meningococcal disease?

Symptoms can come on very fast and make someone very sick. Symptoms include sudden onset of fever, a severe headache, feeling sick to the stomach, vomiting and feeling tired, followed by a stiff neck, sensitivity to light, dizziness and a red/purple blotchy rash.

Is there a vaccine to prevent meningococcal disease?

There are a number of vaccines which protect against the various types of meningococcal bacteria that cause meningococcal disease. Since 2005, routine immunization against meningococcal type C disease has been recommended and publicly-funded for children one year of age. Meningococcal vaccine that prevents up to 80-85% of infections from four types of meningococcal bacteria – A, C, Y and W-135 - is currently available in Ontario through the publicly-funded program.

Who can get meningococcal vaccine (Men ACYW-135) for free?

Students in grades 7 through 12 may receive this vaccine if they have not had a previous dose of it.

Beginning in the 2014/15 school year, children will require proof of immunization against meningococcal disease to attend school.

What are other ways to prevent meningococcal disease?

Avoid sharing things that can spread saliva such as cups, water bottles, food and other utensils. Always clean musical instrument mouth pieces after each use.

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MENINGOCOCCAL ACYW-135 VACCINE CONSENT FORM

STUDENT INFORMATION:

Last Name _____ First Name _____ male female
 Birth Date: year _____ month _____ day ____ School _____ Room/Teacher _____
 Ontario Health Card # _____

PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY:

- YES**, I ask that the student named above be vaccinated with the meningococcal vaccine.
- NO**, I do **NOT** wish the above student to be vaccinated with the meningococcal vaccine (***a valid exemption must be on file at the Health Unit***)
- The above student **has** received the following meningococcal vaccine(s):

Name of Vaccine _____ Date(s) Given: _____

I have read or had explained to me the information about the meningococcal vaccine. I have had the chance to ask questions which were answered to my satisfaction. I understand the risks and benefits of receiving the meningococcal ACYW-135 vaccine.

Date _____ Signature _____ Name (please print) _____
 Home Phone () _____ Work or Cell Phone () _____

This information is collected under the authority of sections 2 and 5 of the **Health Protection and Promotion Act** and Ont. Reg. 585/94 under the **Health Cards and Numbers Control Act** and Section II under the **Immunization of School Pupils Act** for the purpose of maintaining an immunization record for this student. For more information, contact the Freedom of Information Coordinator, Hastings & Prince Edward Counties Health Unit, 613-966-5500.

Who should NOT get this vaccine?

People who:

- have already been immunized with a Men ACYW-135 vaccine (Menactra® and Menveo™) in the past five years;
- have had a bad (life-threatening) reaction to a previous meningococcal vaccine, or any of its components, including latex and diphtheria toxoid;
- have had a bad reaction to any vaccine, or have had Guillain-Barré Syndrome;
- have been vaccinated within the last six months with another *Neisseria meningitidis* polysaccharide vaccine;
- have been vaccinated within the last one month with another meningococcal conjugate C vaccine (NeisVac®, Menjugate®);
- are on high-dose corticosteroids or immunosuppressive agents, or who have immunosuppressive illness (wherever possible, these people should delay vaccination until the condition/treatment has resolved);
- are pregnant.

If your child has a fever or anything more serious than a minor cold, he or she should wait until they feel better before the getting the vaccine.

What are the possible side effects of getting the Men ACYW-135 vaccine?

Some people may have redness or pain where the needle was given. A few may feel tired and have a slight fever after the shot. Rarely, side effects include trouble breathing, a rash or swelling in the throat and face. See a health care provider if a serious reaction occurs following vaccination.

What to Do

Ensure you read and understand the information provided here. Complete the Consent Form on the front, remove it and return it to your child's school as soon as possible. Keep the rest of the sheet for your information. A record of the vaccine administered will be given to your child to bring home.

For More Information

Contact the Hastings & Prince Edward Counties Health Unit Immunization Program at 613-966-5500 x313. Toll free 1-800-267-2803. TTY 613-966-3036 Mon-Fri 830am-430pm. www.yourhealthunit.ca

Parental Awareness/Consent to Treatment

The Health Care Consent Act states that all persons, regardless of age, may consent to medical treatment, provided they understand the benefits and risks of the treatment as well as the benefits and risks of not having the treatment. There is no minimum age in Ontario for informed consent. Students will be assessed by a nurse at the school clinic, based on the principles of the Health Care Consent Act, to ensure that informed consent can be obtained. Parents/Legal guardians are encouraged to talk with their children about the benefits/risks of immunization.
