Meningococcal Conjugate C (Men-C-C) Vaccine

Communicable Disease Control – Factsheet

Immunization has saved more lives in Canada in the last 50 years than any other medical intervention. Vaccines help your immune system to recognize and fight bacteria and viruses that cause diseases.

What is the Men-C-C vaccine?
The Men-C-C vaccine protects against meningococcal disease, type C.

The symptoms of meningococcal disease vary widely, but can include sudden onset of high fever, severe headache, vomiting, stiff neck and rash. Sensitivity to light, sleepiness, confusion and in severe cases, coma may also occur. Meningococcal disease can cause serious infection and can be fatal, even with prompt medical treatment. Those who survive may suffer from permanent brain damage, hearing loss or loss of limbs.

How is the disease spread?
Meningococcal disease is caused by bacteria that can spread easily from one person to another. The bacteria spreads by direct contact with respiratory and oral fluid through close face-to-face contact, by kissing or sharing food, drink, musical instruments, water bottles, cigarettes or other things that have been in the mouth of a person with the disease.

Who should get the Men-C-C vaccine?
The disease can affect people of any age; however, children under the age of 5 — especially those under the age of one — are at highest risk. Meningococcal disease is the leading cause of bacterial meningitis in teenagers and young adults. It is especially important for children to get immunized if they have one or more of the following:

- No spleen or a spleen that is not working properly due to illness such as sickle cell disease, lupus, celiac disease, inflammatory bowel disease or low platelet counts of unknown cause
- An immune system weakened by disease or medical treatment
- Complement, properdin or factor D deficiency
- Bone marrow (stem cell) or solid organ transplant

Some children and adults over two years of age may need a different meningococcal vaccine.

Talk to your doctor or public health nurse for more information on meningococcal vaccines and, to see what vaccines you and your child are eligible to receive free-of-charge as part of the recommended immunization schedule.

Or visit: Manitoba Public Health website www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/index.html

Who should not get the Men-C-C vaccine?
Anyone who has a severe allergy to any of the vaccine ingredients or packaging or had a severe allergic reaction to a previous meningococcal, diphtheria or tetanus shot.

Pregnant women.
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Possible side-effects of the Men-C-C vaccine?
Vaccines are known to be very safe. It is much safer for your child to get the vaccine than to get meningococcal disease.

Common reactions to the vaccine include soreness, redness and swelling where the vaccine was given. Some people may have fever, drowsiness, dizziness, or an upset stomach. These are mild reactions and usually last one to two days. Acetaminophen (Tylenol® or Tempra®) can be given for fever or soreness.

ASA (Aspirin®) should NEVER be given to children because it can cause a severe liver and brain disease called Reye's syndrome.

It is important to stay in the clinic for 15 minutes after getting any vaccine because there is a rare possibility of a severe allergic reaction. This can includes hives, difficulty breathing, or swelling of the throat, tongue or lips. If this happens after you leave the clinic, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department for immediate treatment.

Report any serious or unexpected side-effects to a public health nurse or doctor.

Your record of protection
Make sure your doctor or public health nurse updates your own, or your child’s, immunization record card, after you receive an immunization. Keep the card in a safe place!

Information about the immunizations you or your children receive may be recorded in the Manitoba Immunization Monitoring System (MIMS). This computerized database allows your doctor, your child’s doctor or your public health nurse to find out what immunizations you or your child have had or need to have. Information collected in MIMS may be used to produce immunization records, or notify you or your doctor if someone has missed a particular immunization. Manitoba Health may use the information to monitor how well different vaccines work in preventing disease.
If you need information on the immunizations that you or your child has received, contact your doctor, your local public health unit or nursing station.

For more information on the Men-C-C Vaccine:
Talk to your doctor or public health nurse.
Call Health Links – Info Santé in Winnipeg at 204 788-8200; toll-free elsewhere in Manitoba 1-888-315-9257.

For national recommendations, visit the Public Health Agency of Canada website www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/im/index-eng.php
Or visit: Canadian Paediatric Society website www.cps.ca