Meningococcal Conjugate Quadrivalent Vaccine

Public Health – 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 meningococcal quadrivalent vaccine?
Meningococcal disease is caused by bacteria. The meningococcal quadrivalent vaccine protects against 4 types of meningococcal disease, types A, C, Y and W-135.

Meningococcal disease can invade the blood stream and the brain, and can affect people differently. Some people suddenly get a high fever, upset stomach, stiff neck, bad headache and rash. In really severe cases, coma (i.e. loss of consciousness) can also occur. For some people, bright light hurts their eyes, and they may feel confused and very tired.

Meningococcal disease can cause serious infection and can lead to death, even with quick help from a doctor or nurse. Those who survive the disease can suffer from permanent brain damage, hearing loss or, loss of their arms or legs.

How is the disease spread?
Meningococcal disease can spread easily from person to person by coughing, sneezing, kissing or sharing food, drink, musical instruments, water bottles, cigarettes or other things that have been in the mouth of a person with meningococcal disease.

Who should get the meningococcal quadrivalent vaccine?
Immunization is the best way to protect against meningococcal disease.

Some people have health conditions that put them at increased risk of getting sick with meningococcal disease. It is especially important for people between 2 and 55 years of age to get immunized if they are:

- Complement, properdin or factor D deficient
- Living with no spleen or a spleen that is not working properly
- The caregiver, friend and/or family member of a person who has meningococcal disease
- Working as a researcher or military recruit
- Going to a country where immunization against meningococcal disease is required or recommended

Children under two years of age are also at risk of getting meningococcal disease. However, they are given a different kind of meningococcal vaccine as part of their routine childhood immunizations. It is called the Meningococcal Conjugate C (Men-C-C) vaccine.

Talk to your doctor, public health nurse or nurse practitioner to see who is eligible to receive the meningococcal quadrivalent vaccine free-of-charge as part of Manitoba Health’s recommended immunization schedule.

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

Who Should NOT get the meningococcal quadrivalent vaccine?
Anyone who has had a severe allergic reaction to any of the contents of the vaccine.

Anyone who has a high fever should wait until they feel better to be immunized. The vaccine can still be given if the illness is mild, like a cold.
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**Possible side effects of the vaccine**

Vaccines are known to be very safe. It is much safer 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, headache and tiredness. These are mild reactions that 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 bad allergic reaction. This can include 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.**

**For more information on the meningococcal quadrivalent vaccine:**

Talk to your doctor, public health nurse or nurse practitioner.

Call Health Links-Info Santé in Winnipeg at 204-788-8200; toll-free elsewhere in Manitoba 1-888-315-9257.

Or visit:

**Public Health Agency of Canada website**

www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/im/index-eng.php

**Your record of protection**

Make sure your doctor or public health nurse updates your (or your child’s) immunization record card after receiving any immunization. Keep the card in a safe place!

Information about the immunizations you or your child receives may be recorded in the Manitoba Immunization Monitoring System (MIMS). This computerized database allows your doctor or public health nurse to find out what immunizations you or your child has had or needs to have. Information collected in MIMS may be used to produce immunization records, or notify you, your doctor or public health nurse if you or your child 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, local public health unit or nursing station.