

# Meningococcal disease is serious...

## Make sure your child is protected!

### What is meningococcal disease?

Meningococcal disease is a life-threatening illness. It is caused by bacteria that infect the blood, brain, and spinal cord. People often call it meningitis.

### How do you catch it?

The disease is spread person-to-person. It is easily spread in crowded settings. You can catch meningitis from a person who looks healthy.

### Is meningococcal disease serious?

Ask your child's health care provider if your child is up to date for all vaccines!

Yes! Even with proper treatment, 10–15% of people with meningococcal disease die. Of the people who survive, as many as 20% suffer from some serious complication, such as loss of an arm or leg, brain damage, or permanent hearing loss.



Meningitis can cause shock, coma, and death within hours of the first symptom.

### Is my child at risk?

The disease most often strikes older teens and young adults. If your child travels internationally or has certain medical conditions, he or she may also be at increased risk.

### How can I protect my child from meningococcal disease?



Vaccination is the best way to prevent meningitis.

There are 2 meningococcal vaccines for children and teens: MCV4 (conjugate) and MenB (serogroup B). Preteens and teens need protection from this disease. MCV4 is given to all preteens at age 11–12. A second dose is needed at 16. Teens and young adults 16–23 may also be given MenB.

Children with certain medical conditions should also get vaccinated.

Talk to your child's health care provider about these vaccines.

► For more information, visit [www.vaccineinformation.org](http://www.vaccineinformation.org)

For other vaccine handouts in this series, visit [www.immunize.org/vaccine-summaries](http://www.immunize.org/vaccine-summaries)

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