



Immunization

Meningitis C

What is Meningitis C?

Meningitis is caused by a bacterium called meningococcus. It can cause serious disease including bacterial meningitis, an inflammation of the tissue surrounding the brain and spinal cord. It can also cause meningococemia, a widespread infection of the blood and other organs.

How is it spread?

Some people known as “healthy carriers” carry the germ in their nose or throat without ever getting sick. Meningitis is spread by “healthy carriers,” or by people who are sick with the disease, through direct contact such as: kissing, coughing and sneezing. It can also be spread through saliva when sharing things like: eating utensils, toothbrushes, cigarettes, lipstick, food, beverages, musical instruments and mouthguards. Smoking and overcrowding increases the risk of spreading the disease. Do not share anything you have had in your mouth!

What are the symptoms of Meningitis?

- Severe headache
- Fever
- Vomiting and/or stiff neck
- Sensitivity to bright lights
- Drowsiness or confusion
- Rash/Bruises

About two-thirds of children with meningococcal meningitis have a rash. The rash consists of red spots that do **not** go away or become lighter when pressed against a clear drinking glass.

Anyone with these symptoms should seek emergency medical attention. Meningococcal disease is serious - 10 percent of people who develop the disease will die. Of those who survive, 10 percent will suffer long-term complications such as: deafness, seizures, brain damage, or limb amputations due to nerve damage.

How can Meningitis C be prevented?

- Do not share water bottles, eating utensils, or food
- Make sure to wash your hands regularly and frequently
- Get immunized!

The vaccine is given by a needle and is safe and effective. It protects against Group C meningococcal disease. Meningitis C is responsible for most of the outbreaks in schools and communities in Ontario.

What are the side effects of the vaccine?

Side effects of the vaccine are usually minor and temporary. These include: pain, redness and swelling where the shot was given. Headache, fatigue and muscle pain may also occur in adolescents and adults.

Who should not get the vaccine?

- Those with a fever or any other illness more serious than a minor cold
- Those with an allergy to any component of the vaccine, including aluminum and Diphtheria toxin

Check with a doctor if your child/teen has had a bad reaction to another vaccine.

Windsor Office:
1005 Ouellette Avenue
Windsor, Ontario
(519) 258-2146
Fax: 258-6003

Leamington Office:
215 Talbot Street East
Leamington, Ontario
(519) 326-5716
Fax: 326-4642

Essex Office:
360 Fairview Avenue West
Suite 215, Essex, Ontario
(519) 776-5933
Fax: 776-6102

Website:
www.wechealthunit.org

