

Meningococcus

Meningococcus is one of the most rapid and overwhelming infectious diseases known to man. Most people exposed to meningococcus will not become ill, but for those who do, the disease can quickly become deadly causing a healthy individual to die within hours.

The Disease

How It Spreads

Usually, meningococcal infection is acquired after intimate contact with an infected person. Intimate contact includes:

- Kissing
- Sharing food or beverages
- Staying in the same house or room (including a classroom) for more than four hours a day

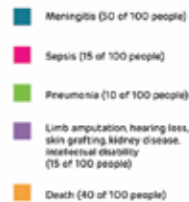
Symptoms and Complications

Symptoms vary based on which complications occur.

- Meningitis – swelling of the coverings of the brain and spinal cord
- Sepsis – infection of the blood
- Pneumonia – infection of the lungs
- Limb amputations
- Hearing loss
- Skin loss or damage requiring grafting
- Kidney disease
- Intellectual disabilities
- Death

About 1 or 2 of every 10 people infected with meningococcus will die.

Meningococcal Disease Complications



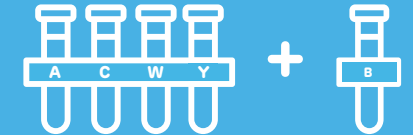
The Vaccines

Meningococcus ACWY

This vaccine is similar to those for pneumococcus and *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib) in that protection against disease occurs when one develops antibodies to the sugar (or polysaccharide) that coats the bacterium.

Meningococcus ABCWY

This vaccine combines the two meningococcal vaccines to protect against all five types at once.



Meningococcus B

Type B accounts for two-thirds of meningococcal infections in infants and one-third in adolescents and adults. The vaccine is made using proteins from the surface of the bacterium.

Who Should Get Vaccinated Against Meningococcus?



Meningococcal ACWY vaccine is recommended for all 11- to 12-year-olds with a second dose at 16 years of age. It is also recommended for some people at other ages who are at higher risk for infection.



Meningococcal B vaccine is recommended as a series of 2 or 3 doses at 16 to 18 years of age. It is also recommended for some people at higher risk of infection.

The meningococcal ABCWY vaccine can be used when a person is eligible for both meningococcal ACWY & meningococcal B vaccines at the same visit.



GO TO [VACCINE.CHOP.EDU](https://vaccine.chop.edu) FOR MORE INFORMATION.