



Ohio Department of Health

Meningitis Vaccine Fact Sheet

Meningitis

Meningitis is an inflammation of the fluid covering the brain and spinal cord. There are two types:

- **Viral meningitis:** Caused by a virus, generally less severe and clears up without specific treatment.
- **Bacterial meningitis:** Caused by bacteria, can be quite severe and may result in brain damage, hearing loss, limb loss or death.

Who's at Risk?

- Anyone who hasn't been vaccinated is at-risk – meningococcal bacteria are spread from person to person through coughing, kissing and sneezing.
- Adolescents aged 16 to 21 are at highest risk for contracting the disease¹. College students are especially susceptible to meningitis because they live in close quarters with other students and often have poor eating and health-care habits.

Vaccination Information

- The MCV4 vaccine, used to prevent bacterial meningitis, should be administered between the ages of 11 and 12.
- The vaccination should then be supplemented by a booster dose at age 16.
- There are two available vaccines for meningitis: Menactra, produced by Sanofi Pasteur; and Menveo, produced by Novartis.
- Adolescents entering most colleges are required to have a meningitis vaccination in order to live on campus.
- 53.6 percent of adolescents aged 13-17 had vaccine coverage in 2009, up from 41.8 percent in 2008. In Ohio, that number was 53.7 percent, essentially on par with the national average but still below CDC recommendations².

Why should I protect my child against Meningitis?

In a school setting, your child has close contact with other children and is at high risk of contracting bacterial meningitis. Bacterial meningitis is an extremely serious disease that has a 10 percent death rate³. In instances where it is not fatal, it can still lead to permanent brain damage, loss of hearing and limb loss, potentially inflicting a life-long disability on your child.

Spread the Word, Not the Disease. Get Vaccinated.

Sponsored by the Ohio Department of Health, "Spread the Word, Not the Disease. Get Vaccinated." is a campaign dedicated to increasing what are very low immunization rates among Ohio teenagers. A lack of vaccinations leaves adolescents in Ohio vulnerable to serious diseases.



¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Vaccines & Immunizations.

² CDC. National, State, and Local Area Vaccination Coverage among Adolescents Aged 13-17 Years -- United States, 2009.

³ Cleveland Clinic. Diseases and Conditions—Bacterial Meningitis.



1-800-282-0546
www.getvaccinatedohio.org

Spread the Word, Not the Disease. Get Vaccinated. aims to empower teens and parents to learn more about recommended adolescent immunizations and get vaccinated. For more information, visit our Facebook page at facebook.com/getvaccinatedohio.