



SOUTH WEST HOSPITAL AND HEALTH SERVICE

Enquiries Immunisation Program Nurse
Community and Allied Health
Health wise Building
72 King Street Charleville QLD 4470

Email: SWHHSCharlevilleSIP@health.qld.gov.au
Telephone: (07) 4650 5179
Facsimile: (07) 4650 5276

Immunisation Program Nurse

Charleville Community and Allied Health
Health Wise Building
Charleville Hospital
72 King Street
CHARLEVILLE QLD 4470

Dear Parent/ Legal Guardian

RE:Year 10 Queensland School Immunisation Program

The Queensland School Immunisation Program offers every Year 10 student in Queensland free meningococcal ACWY vaccination.

Meningococcal disease is a rare but severe infection that occurs when meningococcal bacteria invade the body from the throat or the nose. Meningococcal bacteria are carried in the nose and throat of healthy individuals and are spread through close prolonged contact. Some of the highest rates of meningococcal carriage occur among 15 to 19 year olds and this age group can transmit the meningococcal bacteria to people who are at an increased risk of infection, including young children. There are a number of different strains of meningococcal bacteria. Worldwide, the main strains that cause meningococcal disease are A, B, C, W and Y.

Most people with meningococcal infection fully recover, but some people who survive can develop long term health complications including limb deformity, skin scarring, deafness and possible loss of brain function. Meningococcal W disease has a higher death rate than Meningococcal B and C infections, with a fatality rate of 1 in 10 cases.

The meningococcal ACWY vaccination program has been introduced as a time limited response to a substantial rise in the number of meningococcal W cases Australia-wide during 2016. In Queensland, there was a rise in the numbers of meningococcal W cases and also meningococcal Y cases during 2016.

If your Year 10 child misses the school immunisation clinic, they can also access the meningococcal for free through their local doctor or immunisation provider until the 31st May 2018. While the vaccine is free, they may be charged a consultation fee.

Office
Healthwise Building Charleville
Hospital 72 King Street QLD
4470

Postal
P.O. Box 219
Charleville QLD 4470

Phone
(07) 46505179

Fax
(07) 4650 5276

Suggested Immunisation Clinics:

Charleville Health Clinic

67 Edward Street Charleville QLD 4470
by appointment only (07) 4621 2100

Cunnamulla Hospital

Immunisation Practice Nurse

56 Wicks Street Cunnamulla QLD 4499
(07) 4655 8100

Quilpie Hospital

Immunisation Practice Nurse

30 Gyrica Street Quilpie QLD 4480
(07) 4656 0100

Murweh Shire Council Immunisation Clinic by the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS)

First Thursday of the month from 1:30pm-3:30pm at the Charleville Town Hall Supper Room (Edward St)

Third Thursday of the month from 9:30am-10:30am at the Charleville Town Hall Supper Room (Edward St)

Last Friday of the Month from 9:00am-10:30am at the Town Hall Supper Room (Edward St)

Please Note: If you are planning for your child to be immunised by the RFDS, at the Charleville Town Hall, please contact Sandy Mann's at the Murweh Shire Council on (07) 4656 8355, prior to the specific date you are attending, to ensure there will be a vaccine available.

For all information on the **RFDS Outreach Immunisation** clinic dates and times including, **Eulo, Thargomindah, Yowah, Windorah and Eromanga**, please contact the RFDS office and speak to the RFDS Immunisation nurse, Joanne Mahony on (07) 4654 1233.

More information about the Queensland School Immunisation Program is available at www.health.qld.gov.au/immunisation

If you have any further queries or concerns relating to the School Immunisation Program or immunisations in general, please don't hesitate to email us on SWHHSCCharlevilleSIP@health.qld.gov.au

Thank you for protecting your child and our community from these severe and life threatening diseases.

Yours sincerely

Immunisation Program Nurse
School Based Youth Health Nurse
Charleville Community and Allied health
22/05/17

The Meningococcal ACWY Immunisation program Frequently Asked Questions

What is meningococcal Disease?

Meningococcal bacteria can cause meningitis (inflammation of the lining of the brain) and septicaemia (blood poisoning); both diseases are very serious and can kill, especially if not diagnosed early.

Meningococcal disease can be a severe infection, but most people make a full recovery. However, about 10 per cent of cases suffer a long term disability (e.g. deafness, intellectual disability). In very rare cases, meningococcal infection can result in death. Meningococcal disease usually takes 3 to 4 days to develop but can take as long as 10 days. It is important that people with the symptoms seek medical advice early. The disease is serious and can be life-threatening, but most people recover completely with early antibiotic treatment.

The meningococcal bacteria are divided into several groups. The most common are A, B, C, W and Y. Infants, young children, teenagers and young adults have the highest risk of meningococcal disease.

Not all groups of meningococcal bacteria causing disease can be prevented through vaccination, that's why it is important for you to be familiar with the symptoms and signs of the disease.

Symptoms of meningococcal disease include severe headaches, fever, vomiting and diarrhoea, muscle pains, drowsiness (difficult to wake up), dislike of bright lights, convulsions/ seizures pale blotchy skin with or without a rash and stiff neck.

At any one time, approximately 10 per cent of healthy people carry meningococcal bacteria harmlessly in their nose or throat, and do not become ill. They can, however, spread the disease to others.

How common is it?

Meningococcal group C disease is now rare in Australia since Men C vaccination was introduced on the National Immunisation Program schedule for children aged from 12 months in 2003. Men B groups are now the most common cause of meningococcal disease in children and young adults. In 2016, however, there has been a large increase in Men W disease both in Queensland and Australia.

Why do I/ my child need to get this vaccine?

Older teenagers (15 – 19 years old) are at higher risk of getting MenW meningococcal disease, so the vaccine will protect you/ your child. Vaccines also reduce the risk of you/ your child carrying the bacteria and so protects those around you/ your child.

I/my child had the Men C vaccine, do I/ they still need to have this?

Yes, the Men C vaccination only protects against the MenC group of bacteria. The Men ACWY vaccine will increase the protection against Men C as well as protecting you or your child against the other meningococcal groups (A, W and Y).

When will the vaccine become available?

The school program for year 10 students will run in schools during the 2017 school year. Free meningococcal ACWY vaccine will also be available from GPs and other immunisation providers from 1 June 2017 until the end of May 2018.

Do I/ my child have to have it?

All vaccines in Australia are voluntary but it's recommended that everybody in this age group has the Men ACWY vaccine to help protect themselves and others such as young infants, who may be particularly susceptible to this disease. You or your parent/guardian, have to consent to have the vaccine. For the school program you will receive a consent form through the school.

What if I want the vaccination but my parents don't agree?

If you can show that you understand the benefits and risks of MenACWY vaccination, you can consent to have the vaccine. But it's hoped that you will discuss the matter as a family and come to a shared decision.

Is there anyone who should not get the vaccine?

Only those people who have had a severe (anaphylaxis) to previous meningococcal vaccines or components of any vaccines

Is the vaccine safe?

The vaccine has been used for many years across the world (the USA and the UK both have Meningococcal ACWY immunisation programs) and has an excellent safety record.

What are the common side effects of the vaccine?

You/ your child may get soreness and some redness after the injection. Some people may also get a headache, but these symptoms should settle after one to two days. If you/ your child feel unwell then you should contact your GP.

Where can I get further information about the vaccine or on meningococcal disease?

If you would like further information about the vaccine or meningococcal disease you can contact your local GP, immunisation provider or the Health Contact Centre 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84). You can also visit the Queensland Health website at

<http://conditions.health.qld.gov.au/HealthCondition/condition/14/33/95/meningococcal-disease>

(Adapted from the brochure, *"In school years 9 to 13? Protection yourself against meningitis and septicaemia"*. Produced for Public Health England by William Lea. First published June 2015)

Meningococcal Disease

About	<p>Meningococcal disease is a rare but severe infection that occurs when meningococcal bacteria invade the body from the throat or nose.</p> <p>Meningococcal bacteria are carried in the nose and throat of a small proportion of healthy people (in about 10%) and are spread through close prolonged contact. The bacteria are more commonly found in teenagers and young adults. There are a number of different strains of meningococcal bacteria. Worldwide, the main strains that cause meningococcal disease are A, B, C, W and Y.</p> <p>Most people with meningococcal infection fully recover, but some people who survive can develop long-term health complications including limb deformity, skin scarring, deafness and possible loss of brain function. Meningococcal W disease has a higher death rate than meningococcal C and meningococcal B infections and may be fatal in about 1 in 10 cases.</p>
How is it spread?	<p>It is not easy to catch meningococcal disease. While the bacteria can be spread via droplets from the nose or throat during coughing and sneezing, close and prolonged contact with a person who has the bacteria in their nose or throat is usually needed for the bacteria to spread. For example, the disease is not spread by sharing saliva through sharing cups, drinks or cigarettes. As meningococcal bacteria cannot live long outside of the body, the infection can also not be picked up from water supplies, swimming pools, bed linen or pillows.</p> <p>After exposure to the bacteria, it usually takes from three to four days to become ill, although sometimes it can be as little as one day or as long as 10 days.</p>
Symptoms	<p>The symptoms of meningitis don't appear in any particular order and may appear differently in different people.</p> <p>In older children and adults symptoms of meningitis can include headache, fever, vomiting, neck stiffness, drowsiness and confusion, and discomfort looking at bright lights.</p> <p>There may also be a rash, particularly with meningococcal meningitis where there is often a characteristic purplish-red rash which does not fade under pressure.</p> <p>If anyone has the above symptoms, seek urgent medical attention. Early treatment can sometimes prevent serious complications.</p>
Complications	<p>Meningococcal infections can progress rapidly to serious disease or death in previously healthy persons and long term effects may include limb deformity, skin scarring, deafness or loss of brain function.</p>
Vaccination can prevent disease	<p>Some types of meningococcal disease can be prevented with immunisation and these include meningococcal A, B, C, W, and Y.</p> <p>There is no single vaccine that provides protection against all strains of meningococcal disease.</p> <p>This program is offering free meningococcal ACWY vaccination to all Year 10 students through the School Immunisation Program.</p>
How many doses?	<p>One dose of meningococcal ACWY vaccine is required.</p>
Is the vaccine safe?	<p>The meningococcal ACWY vaccine is safe and effective. Meningococcal ACWY vaccination programs targeting adolescents have been effectively implemented in the UK since 2015 and in the US since 2005.</p>
What does it contain?	<p>The vaccine contains the antigens of four serogroups (A, C, W135 and Y) which are conjugated to a carrier protein.</p> <p>It also contains other additives in very small amounts to either assist the vaccine to work or to act as a preservative.</p>
Are there any side effects?	<p>Serious side effects from the vaccine are extremely rare. Minor side effects that may be experienced include tenderness, redness or swelling at the site of injection and, low grade fever.</p>

Meningococcal ACWY Vaccination Program

Why is this program targeting 15 to 19 year olds?	<p>Some of the highest rates of meningococcal carriage occur among 15 to 19 year olds and this age group can transmit the meningococcal bacteria to people who are at increased risk of infection, including young children.</p> <p>The reason we are vaccinating 15 to 19 year olds is to reduce the risk of meningococcal disease caused by strains A, C, W and Y in this age group, and to reduce the spread of meningococcal disease caused by these strains. Vaccinating this group will protect these individuals immediately and the wider community in the longer term.</p>
What if my child has already been vaccinated against meningococcal C?	<p>Previous vaccination with the meningococcal C vaccine is no barrier to having the meningococcal ACWY vaccine.</p> <p>Vaccination against meningococcal C has been included in the National Immunisation Program Schedule since 1 January 2003. From 2003 to June 2008, meningococcal C vaccine was provided in a catch-up program for all children aged 1 to 19 years. This means that many children in the target group for the Meningococcal ACWY Vaccination Program will have received meningococcal C vaccine.</p> <p>The vaccine being used in the Meningococcal ACWY Vaccination Program provides protection against meningococcal strains ACWY. It is important that individuals are vaccinated with meningococcal ACWY to protect them against the extra strains.</p>
How long will the school program for meningococcal ACWY last?	<p>The school immunisation program is time limited and will vaccinate Year 10 students in 2017 only. It will commence in some schools in school term 2, 2017 with progressive implementation during the 2017 school year.</p>
Which vaccine is being used?	<p>The Meningococcal ACWY Vaccination Program will be using Menveo® and Menactra® vaccines.</p> <p>There are three brands of vaccine which protect against meningococcal ACWY registered for use in Australia and all have been shown to be effective. There is no single vaccine which gives protection against all strains of meningococcal disease.</p>
Where can I get more information about meningococcal disease?	<p>Visit the Queensland Health website at http://conditions.health.qld.gov.au/HealthCondition/condition/14/33/95/meningococcal-disease</p> <p>Call 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84)</p> <p>Make an appointment with your doctor</p>

