

## Meningococcal C Conjugate (Men-C) Vaccine

**Keep your child safe.  
Get all vaccines on time.**

By getting all vaccines on time, your child can be protected from many diseases over a lifetime.

Immunization has saved more lives in Canada in the last 50 years than any other health measure.

### What is the Men-C vaccine?

The Men-C vaccine protects against infection from one of the most common types of meningococcal bacteria, type C. The vaccine is approved by Health Canada.

The Men-C vaccine is provided free as part of your child's routine immunizations. Call your health care provider to make an appointment.

### Who should get the Men-C vaccine?

The Men-C vaccine is given to infants as a series of 2 doses. The first is given at 2 months of age, and the second at 12 months. The vaccine is given at the same time as other childhood immunizations.

Men-C Vaccine	Child's Age at Immunization
1 <sup>st</sup> dose	2 months
2 <sup>nd</sup> dose	12 months

The vaccine may also be given to people:

- born before 2002 who are 24 years of age and under who did not get a dose of vaccine on or after their 10<sup>th</sup> birthday;
- 18 years of age and older who have had a stem cell transplant; and

- who have been in close contact with someone with meningococcal type C disease.

It is important to keep a record of all immunizations received.

### What are the benefits of the vaccine?

Vaccines that protect against meningococcal type C infection are the best way to protect your child against this serious and sometimes fatal disease.

When you get your child immunized, you help protect others as well.

### What are the possible reactions after the vaccine?

Vaccines are very safe. It is much safer to get the vaccine than to get meningococcal disease. Common reactions to the vaccine may include soreness, redness and swelling where the vaccine was given. Fever, drowsiness, crankiness, loss of appetite, nausea, headache or muscle soreness may also occur within 24 hours after getting the vaccine. These reactions are mild and generally last 1 to 2 days.

Acetaminophen (e.g. Tylenol<sup>®</sup>) or ibuprofen\* (e.g. Advil<sup>®</sup>) can be given for fever or soreness. ASA (e.g. Aspirin<sup>®</sup>) should not be given to anyone under 18 years of age due to the risk of Reye Syndrome.

\*Ibuprofen should not be given to children under 6 months of age without first speaking to your health care provider.

For information on Reye Syndrome, see [HealthLinkBC File #84 Reye Syndrome](#).

It is important to stay in the clinic for 15 minutes after getting any vaccine because there is an extremely rare possibility, less than 1 in a million, of a life-threatening allergic reaction called anaphylaxis. This may include hives, difficulty breathing, or swelling of the throat, tongue or lips. Should this reaction occur, your health care provider is prepared to treat it. Emergency treatment includes administration of epinephrine (adrenaline) and transfer by ambulance to the nearest emergency department. If symptoms develop after you leave the clinic, call **9-1-1** or the local emergency number.

It is important to always report serious or unexpected reactions to your health care provider.

### **Who should not get the Men-C vaccine?**

Speak with your health care provider if your child has had a life-threatening reaction to a previous dose of meningococcal vaccine, to any component of the vaccine, or to latex.

There is no need to delay getting immunized because of a cold or other mild illness. However, if you have concerns speak with your health care provider.

### **What is Meningococcal C infection?**

Meningococcal C infection is caused by bacteria called meningococcal type C. It can cause serious and life-threatening infections including meningitis, an infection of the lining that covers the brain, and septicemia, an infection of the blood. For every 100 people who get sick, up to 15 will die, even if they receive treatment. Permanent complications of infection include brain damage and deafness.

Meningococcal infection is spread from person to person by coughing, sneezing, or close face-to-face contact. It can also be spread through saliva. Babies and young children can become sick through sharing soothers, bottles or toys used by other children. Older children and adults can become sick through activities such as kissing, or sharing food, drinks, cigarettes, lipstick, water bottles, and mouth guards used for sports or mouthpieces of musical instruments.

Meningococcal type C disease is now rare in B.C. because of routine childhood immunization programs.

### **Mature Minor Consent**

It is recommended that parents or guardians and their children discuss consent for immunization. Children under the age of 19, who are able to understand the benefits and possible reactions for each vaccine and the risk of not getting immunized, can legally consent to or refuse immunizations. For more information on mature minor consent see [HealthLinkBC File #119 The Infants Act, Mature Minor Consent and Immunization](#).

For more information on immunizations, visit ImmunizeBC at <https://immunizebc.ca/>.



ImmunizeBC



BC Centre for Disease Control  
An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority

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