

## Meningococcal Conjugate (A, C, Y, W-135) Vaccine (MenC-ACYW)

**Immunization protects you from disease. Get protected, get immunized.**

- **Vaccines make your immune system stronger by building antibodies, which help prevent diseases.**
- **Immunization is safe. It is much safer to get immunized than to get this disease.**

Who should have MenC-ACYW vaccine?

This vaccine is given to Grade 9 students. Children who did not get the vaccine in Grade 9 are eligible for free vaccine until the end of Grade 12. If your child had MenC-ACYW when they were 12 years or older, they do not need the Grade 9 dose.

This vaccine is given to people who are at risk for meningococcal disease (e.g., health problems, some lab workers). Talk to a public health nurse to find out if you can get the vaccine for free.

This vaccine may be offered after close contact with meningococcal disease.

Travellers to a meningococcal risk area should have this vaccine, but it is not free. Check with your health insurance provider as some plans may cover it.

How many doses of this vaccine are needed?

Most people only need 1 dose, which is given in Grade 9. People who are at greater risk for disease may need extra doses.

Are there other vaccines that protect against meningococcal disease?

Even though you may have had a meningococcal vaccine in the past, you may still need MenC-ACYW.

MenconC is given to babies to protect them from type C meningococcal disease. Even if teens had MenconC as a baby, they still need MenC-ACYW in Grade 9 to boost type C protection and to protect them from types A, Y, and W-135 meningococcal disease.

Men-B is another vaccine given to some people with certain types of health problems. It protects against type B meningococcal disease. Most people with these types of health problems need both Men-B and MenC-ACYW.

How well does the vaccine work?

The vaccine is 80% to 85% effective. Protection may weaken over time.

Where can I get MenC-ACYW vaccine?

The vaccine is offered to Grade 9 students in school. Information about the disease and the vaccine will be sent to the parent or guardian. If you want your child to get the vaccine, you must fill out the consent form and return it to the school.

If you need the vaccine due to work (e.g., some lab workers), talk to your workplace health and safety department.

Anyone who qualifies for free vaccine, should contact the public health office in their area.

If you are travelling to a meningococcal risk area, call a travel health clinic (e.g., [AHS Travel Health Services](#)) or speak to your doctor or pharmacist.

## Are there side effects from MenC-ACYW vaccine?

Reactions to the vaccine are usually mild and go away in a few days. They may include:

- redness, swelling, bruising and discomfort where the needle was given
- feeling tired or irritable
- headache or body aches
- poor appetite, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- fever
- rash

It is important to stay for 15 minutes after immunization because people can have a rare but serious allergic reaction (anaphylaxis). If anaphylaxis happens, you will be given medicine to treat the symptoms.

Unusual reactions can happen. Call Health Link at 811 to report any unusual reactions.

## How can I manage side effects?

- To help with discomfort and swelling, put a cool, wet cloth over the area.
- If you need fever or pain medicine, check with your pharmacist or doctor. Do not give aspirin to anyone younger than 19 years old because it can cause serious health problems.
- Some people with health problems (e.g., weak immune system) must call their doctor whenever they get a fever. If you have been told to do this, call your doctor—even if you think the fever was due to immunization.

## Is there anyone who cannot have MenC-ACYW vaccine?

You may not be able to have the vaccine if you:

- have an allergy to parts of the vaccine—always tell your healthcare provider about allergies.
- had a severe or unusual reaction after this vaccine (or a similar one)—always tell your healthcare provider if you have had reactions.

You can be immunized if you have a mild illness (e.g., cold), even if you have a fever.

## For More Information



Call Health Link at **811**



Go to **immunizealberta.ca**



Go to **myhealth.alberta.ca**

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# Quick Facts: Meningococcal Disease

## What it is

- a bacteria that causes meningitis (infection of the brain and spinal cord covering) and other serious infections (e.g., blood)
- 1 out of 5 people become deaf, get brain damage, have seizures, or lose a limb
- 1 out of 10 people can die

## Who is most at risk

Most serious infections happen in people who:

- are 4 years of age or younger, 15 to 19 years of age, or 60 years of age and older
- have health problems
- have a respiratory infection, like influenza
- live in crowded homes
- smoke or are exposed to second-hand smoke
- travel to meningococcal risk countries

## How it spreads

- spread from saliva (e.g., kissing; sharing food, toys, or water bottles that have been in someone else's mouth)
- some people do not have symptoms, but can spread the disease