

MENINGOCOCCAL C VACCINE INFORMATION

(MENJUGATE® OR NEISVAC-C®)

WHAT IS MENINGOCOCCAL DISEASE AND HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

Meningococcal disease is caused by the bacteria *Neisseria Meningitidis*. It can lead to inflammation of the tissue around the brain and spinal cord (meningitis) or infection of the bloodstream. Symptoms can include sudden onset of fever, severe headache, stiff neck, nausea, vomiting and sometimes a rash. Severe illness can develop quickly in a matter of hours, and 10% can die from the disease. Up to one in five survivors have long-term disabilities such as limb loss, brain damage, and/or deafness. Meningococcal disease is quite rare, with approximately 300 people affected in Canada every year. Meningococcal disease can affect people of any age, although it is most common in teenagers and infants less than one year of age.

The bacteria spread from person to person through direct contact with secretions from the nose and throat of an infected individual, from kissing, or using items that have been in contact with an infected person's mouth, such as: water bottles, straws, cigarettes, e-cigarettes, food, utensils, musical instruments, toothbrushes, or lipstick.

HOW CAN MENINGOCOCCAL DISEASE BE PREVENTED?

- Vaccination is the best protection against meningococcal disease. Meningococcal vaccines are safe and effective
- One dose of Meningococcal-C vaccine is required after the age of one
- Proof of vaccination against meningococcal disease, or a valid exemption, is required by law for all children attending school in Ontario

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF THE VACCINE?

- Redness, swelling or discomfort at the injection site
- Headache, fatigue
- These mild side effects are not dangerous and can demonstrate that the vaccine is working effectively to build immunity.
- Severe side effects are rare

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WHO SHOULD AVOID THIS IMMUNIZATION?

- People who have had a severe allergic (anaphylactic) reaction to a vaccine in the past
- People with previous severe allergic reaction to Meningococcal C vaccine or any of its specific components or container (e.g., diphtheria toxoid carrier protein)
- People who have received a Meningococcal conjugate vaccine within the past 4 weeks
- People with a problem with their immune system due to illness or medication

WHO SHOULD CONSULT THEIR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER BEFORE VACCINATION?

- People with complicated medical issues or previous severe reactions to vaccines should consult their health care provider before receiving Meningococcal-C vaccine