



Dear Parent or Guardian:

As the school nurse at the Rosendale-Brandon School District, I am writing to inform you, as required by Wisconsin State Statute, about the dangers of meningococcal disease, commonly known as bacterial meningitis, a rare but potentially fatal infection that can occur among teenagers and college students. While meningococcal disease is rare and difficult to contract, it is very serious. There are vaccines that may help to prevent this infection.

Meningococcal bacteria can potentially be transmitted through close contact with an infected person through direct contact with respiratory and/or oral secretions from an infected person (for example, through coughing, kissing, sharing drinking containers, sharing other personal items such as chapstick, eating utensils, toothbrushes, etc.). Teenagers and college students are at increased risk for meningococcal disease compared to the general population. Meningococcal disease can be misdiagnosed as something less serious, because early symptoms like high fever, severe headache, nausea, vomiting and stiff neck, are similar to those of common viral illnesses. The disease can progress rapidly and can cause death or permanent disability within 48 hours of initial symptoms.

Keeping up-to-date with recommended immunizations is the best defense against meningococcal disease. There are several vaccines that protect against the different types of *Neisseria meningitidis* bacteria. There are two types of vaccines that protect against several kinds of meningococcal disease.

Meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV4)

MCV4 protects your child against the four most common types of bacteria that cause disease. MCV4 is a routine recommendation for all children aged 11 to 12 years, with a booster for teens aged 16 to 18. Teens who did not get their first dose at the right time should get it as soon as possible. Teens with high-risk conditions like weak immune systems may need more doses.

Meningococcal B vaccine (MenB)

MenB protects against most meningococcal B strains. It may be given to teens and adults aged 16 to 23 who have rare health conditions, who are at increased risk during a meningococcal B disease outbreak or based on shared decision making with your health care provider.

For more information about meningococcal disease and immunization, please feel free to contact me directly at (920)872-5402 or visit the following websites to learn more about meningococcal disease, vaccine information, and public health resources.

- Department of Health Services Meningococcal Disease Fact Sheet <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p4/p42072.pdf>
- Meningitis Foundation of America, <https://www.musa.org/>
- <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/invasive-bacteria/meningitis-viral-bacterial.htm>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/vis-statements/mening.html>

Sincerely,
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