



Fact Sheet

New recommendations for meningococcal vaccine

Teens entering 8th and 12th grade in fall 2016 will need an additional vaccination. Missouri has updated its vaccination requirements for school children to include vaccination against meningococcal disease.

Meningococcal disease is not very common, but when it strikes, it can be deadly. It often unexpectedly impacts teens and young adults who appear otherwise to be healthy. It is caused by bacteria that cause infections to the lining of the brain or spinal cord, or cause bloodstream infections.

About 1,000 people get meningococcal disease each year in the U.S. Adolescents and young adults age 16 – 21 are at higher risk for the disease, which is spread from person-to-person through activities like kissing, sharing drinks, food or eating utensils, coughing, and having close social contact, including living together.

Symptoms can include a high fever, chills, nausea, exhaustion and a rash. The symptoms are sometimes confused with flu symptoms, but an infected person can become seriously ill very quickly. A person who has a sudden onset of these symptoms, or has severe symptoms should seek medical care immediately.

The best way to prevent meningococcal disease is to be vaccinated against it. Some meningococcal vaccines are designed to protect against four serogroups (A, C, W, and Y). These vaccines are called “quadrivalent”. The CDC recommends a second vaccine to protect against serogroup (B). The serogroup B meningococcal vaccine is recommended for 16 year olds, but is not required for school. There is not a single meningococcal vaccine right now that offers protection against all the common serogroups.

Students can visit their health care provider or the Health Department to get all recommended doses of meningococcal vaccine.

Learn more by visiting www.phelpscountyhealth.com, or call (573) 458-6010. The Phelps/Maries County Health Department – caring for your family, caring for our community, caring for YOU!



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