

# MENINGOCOCCAL QUADRIVALENT VACCINE INFORMATION

## (MENACTRA<sup>®</sup>, MENVEO<sup>®</sup> OR NIMENRIX<sup>®</sup> MEN-C-ACYW<sub>135</sub> VACCINE)

### 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.
- Serious illness can develop quickly in a matter of hours, and 10 percent can die from the disease. Up to 1 in 5 survivors have long-term disabilities such as limb loss, brain damage, and/or deafness.
- Meningococcal disease is not very common in Canada, but teens may be at increased risk.
- The bacteria can 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.

### How effective is the Meningococcal ACYW<sub>135</sub> vaccine?

- The quadrivalent meningococcal vaccine (MenC ACYW<sub>135</sub>) vaccine works very well. Effectiveness within four years of vaccination in adolescence is 80% to 85%. It protects against four types of meningococcal bacteria (A, C, Y, and W-135).
- Additional vaccine doses are recommended later on for some individuals who have higher risk of disease or exposure (e.g. travel to certain areas, military/laboratory personnel, contact with a known case).

### What are the side effects of this vaccine?

- The Meningococcal ACYW<sub>135</sub> vaccine is safe and generally well-tolerated. Common side effects are mild and short-lived and include headache, fatigue, and injection site reactions such as pain, redness and swelling. These side effects mean your immune system is responding to the vaccine and building up protection. Apply ice to the site and/or take a non-aspirin pain reliever to help minimize pain and/or swelling. Serious reactions are rare.
- Students are observed for a minimum of 15 minutes after their vaccination to ensure there are no immediate side effects. Anyone who experiences serious health effects after they leave the clinic should consult their doctor and notify York Region Public Health

### More about the Meningococcal ACYW<sub>135</sub> vaccine (Menactra<sup>®</sup>, Menveo<sup>®</sup>, Nimenrix<sup>®</sup> vaccine)

- Students in grades 7-12 in Ontario are eligible for one dose of the Meningococcal ACYW<sub>135</sub> vaccine as part of the student immunization program. In addition, individuals born in 1997 or after are able to receive a dose if not already vaccinated.

- As an *Immunization of School Pupils Act* requirement in Ontario all students aged 12 and older must to be up-to-date with their meningococcal vaccine or have a valid exemption to attend school, otherwise they could face school suspension. If your child received a dose of this vaccine in the past (between ages of 1-5 years) another dose is not required for school attendance, but it is safe and recommended for your child to still receive an additional dose in the pre-teen or teen years.
- Meningococcal ACYW<sub>135</sub> vaccine is a different vaccine from (and provides more protection than) the meningococcal C vaccine (Men-C-C vaccine such as NeisVac-C® or Menjugate®) which is typically given to babies at one year of age and only protects against C strain meningitis.
- Get protection early, be vaccinated at the earliest opportunity. If your child misses being vaccinated in school, they can still receive Meningococcal ACYW<sub>135</sub> vaccine at a York Region Public Health community clinic. Visit [york.ca/immunization](http://york.ca/immunization) for clinic information.

### **Who should not get this vaccine at school and should consult their health care provider?**

- Those who have had a severe reaction to a vaccine (e.g., anaphylaxis)
- Those who have an illness or take any medication that weakens the immune system
- Those with previous severe allergic reaction to Meningococcal ACYW<sub>135</sub> vaccine or any of its specific components or container (e.g. diphtheria toxoid carrier protein)
- Those who have received a Meningococcal conjugate vaccine within the past 4 weeks
- Vaccination should be postponed in persons with moderate or severe acute illness. Persons with minor acute illness may be vaccinated if not under isolation for COVID-19.