

## Meningococcal Meningitis

**Possible to Prevent**  
**Dangerous to ignore**

There is a rare, but sometimes deadly, disease that strikes college students.

The disease spreads quickly, and within hours of the first symptoms, can cause organ failure, brain damage, amputation of limbs, and even death.

Parents and students should learn more about Meningococcal Meningitis and consider immunization.

Vaccination can prevent most cases of disease on college campuses.

Learn More. Get the facts about meningitis on campus, and get vaccinated.

## Find Out More About Meningitis and Vaccination

For more information about meningitis and the vaccine, talk to your personal physician, local public health department, or contact the safety office at **281.998.6183**. Additionally, the following resources provide more information on how to prevent meningitis.

- National Meningitis Association, [www.nmaus.org](http://www.nmaus.org)
- Meningitis Foundation of America, [www.musa.org](http://www.musa.org)
- American College Health Association, [www.acha.org](http://www.acha.org)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

**Don't Wait.**  
**Vaccinate.**



## Meningitis on Campus

**Know your risk**

**Learn about vaccination**



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**[www.sanjac.edu](http://www.sanjac.edu)**



## Did You know?

- Meningitis strikes about 3,000 Americans each year and claims as many as 300 lives. Between 100 and 125 cases occur on college campuses each year.
- Five to 15 college students die each year as a result.
- Cases among teenagers and young adults have more than doubled since 1991.
- The frequency of outbreaks has risen at U.S. colleges and universities during the 1990s.

## What is Meningitis?

- Meningitis is a rare but potentially fatal bacterial infection.
- It can occur as either meningococcal meningitis, an inflammation that affects the brain and spinal cord, or as meningococemia, the presence of bacteria in the blood.
- Permanent brain damage, hearing loss, learning disabilities, limb amputation, kidney failure, or death can result from the infection.

## What Causes Meningitis?

This infectious disease is caused by the bacterium *Neisseria meningitidis*, a leading cause of bacterial meningitis in older children and young adults in the U.S.

## Is There A Vaccine To Help Prevent Meningitis?

- A safe effective vaccine is available.
- The vaccine is 85 percent to 100 percent effective in preventing four kinds of bacteria (serious groups A, C, Y, W-135) that cause about 70 percent of disease in the U.S.
- The vaccine is safe, with mild and infrequent side effects, such as redness and pain in the injection site lasting up to two days.
- After vaccination, immunity develops within seven to 10 days. As with any vaccine, vaccination against meningitis may not protect 100 percent of all susceptible individuals.

## Vaccination Now Required for First-Time College Students

Certain college students, particularly freshmen who live or plan to live in dormitories or residence halls, have a six times the increased risk of contracting the disease.

Texas Education Code, 51.9192, Subchapter Z, establishes the requirement for bacterial meningitis vaccination for certain students and identifies exceptions to that requirement. This subchapter applies only to entering students enrolling in public, private or independent institutions of higher education on or after January 1, 2012.

## Early Symptoms of Meningitis

- high fever
- vomiting
- neck stiffness
- nausea
- rash
- severe headache
- lethargy
- sensitivity to light

Meningitis usually peaks in late winter and early spring, overlapping flu season symptoms can easily be mistaken for the flu.

Because the infection progresses quickly, students should seek medical care immediately if two or more of these symptoms occur at one time.

If untreated, meningitis can lead to shock and death within hours of first experiencing symptoms.

## How is Meningitis Transmitted?

Meningococcal bacteria are transmitted through air droplets and direct contact with persons already infected with the disease.

Direct contact also occurs with shared items, such as cigarettes or drinking glasses or through intimate contact such as kissing.

