

# Meningococcal C (Men C) Vaccine

## How can I protect myself against Men C disease?

People should avoid sharing items where saliva is passed from one person to another to protect themselves from the disease.

Also, there is a very effective vaccine which produces long-term immunity (possibly for life) against Men C disease. Almost everyone (92% to 97%) who receives the vaccine will be protected. The protection from this vaccine is only for the Meningitis Type C strain, and not for other strains of meningococcal disease.

## How can I get the vaccine?

As of January 2005, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has added Men C vaccine to the list of publicly-funded vaccines for routine immunization. This vaccine will be provided to children and youth over several years.

## Who can get the free vaccine?

- Children one year of age
- Individuals born between 1986 - 1996

## Is the Men C Vaccine Safe?

Yes, all of the components of the vaccine have been found to be very safe.

The most common side effects are soreness and redness where the needle is given, and mild fever. This usually goes away in 1 to 2 days. Applying ice and/or using acetaminophen can help minimize discomfort, swelling, or fever.

More severe side effects such as high fever, trouble breathing, hives, and convulsions are extremely rare. If serious side effects occur, see your doctor right away, or go directly to hospital.

There is no evidence that this vaccine causes meningitis.

## Who should not receive Men C Vaccine?

- People with a fever or anything more serious than a minor cold should delay the vaccine until they're well
- People with known allergy to any part of the vaccine used (aluminum hydroxide, sodium phosphate, mannitol, diphtheria, or tetanus toxoid)
- Safety in pregnancy has not been documented
- People previously immunized with the Men C vaccine do not require re-vaccination; this vaccine offers long lasting protection against the Men C strain
- People previously immunized with other vaccines for meningococcal disease (such as meningococcal ACY&W135, a polysaccharide vaccine used for travel), should wait six months before being vaccinated with Men C vaccine

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