

Meningococcal Type B (4CMenB) Vaccine

Public Health Branch - Factsheet

Immunization is one of the most important accomplishments in public health that has, over the past 50 years, led to the elimination, containment and control of diseases that were once very common in Canada¹. Vaccines help your immune system to recognize and fight bacteria and viruses that cause disease.

What is meningococcal disease?

Meningococcal disease is caused by bacteria that can spread from one person to another.

The bacteria spreads by direct contact with respiratory and oral fluid through close face-to-face contact, by kissing or sharing food, drink, musical instruments, water bottles, cigarettes or other things that have been in the mouth of a person with the disease.

The symptoms of meningococcal disease vary widely, but can include sudden onset of high fever, severe headache, vomiting, stiff neck and rash. Sensitivity to light, sleepiness, confusion, and in severe cases, coma may also occur.

Meningococcal disease can cause serious and sometime life-threatening infections, such as meningitis (infection of the lining of the brain and spinal cord) and sepsis (blood poisoning), even with prompt medical treatment. Those who survive the disease may suffer from permanent brain damage, hearing loss or loss of limbs.

Meningococcal disease is the leading cause of bacterial meningitis in teenagers and young adults. Of the several different strains of meningococcal disease, type B is the most common in Canada.

What is the 4CMenB vaccine?

The 4CMenB vaccine protects against type B meningococcal disease.

The 4CMenB vaccine has been approved by Health Canada for the protection of those two months to 25 years of age.

It will not protect against meningococcal disease caused by other strain types.

The 4CMenB vaccine schedule is dependent on the age of the child and may require two to three doses.

4CMenB immunization schedule

Age at series initiation	# of doses	Schedule
2 to 5 months	3	At least 2 months between between first 2 doses. 3 rd dose: 6 months after 2 nd dose and at age \geq 12 months
6 to 11 months	3	At least 2 months between first 2 doses. 3 rd dose: 2 months after 2 nd dose and at age \geq 12 months
12 to 23 months	2	At least two months between doses
2 to 25 years	2	At least one month between doses

Why should my child get the meningococcal type B vaccine?

Meningococcal disease can affect people of any age; however, children under the age of five — especially those under the age of one — are at highest risk.

Being vaccinated against meningococcal type B disease is the best means of protection.

The vaccine works by stimulating the immune system of the vaccinated person. If a vaccinated person is infected with type B meningococcal bacteria, his/her immune system is usually ready to destroy it.

Who should get the 4CMenB vaccine?

4CMenB vaccine is available free of charge through Manitoba's Immunization Program for anyone between the ages of two months and 25 years of age:

- Who may have been exposed to a meningococcal type B infection (use in those older than 25 years of age is assessed on a case by cases basis); Or

¹ The Public Health Agency of Canada

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- Who are at high risk of contracting meningococcal disease due to high risk medical conditions including:
 - living with no spleen or a spleen that is not working properly (including sickle cell disease)
 - complement, properdin or factor D deficiencies
 - Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)

Parents who choose to have their children protected against meningococcal type B disease can discuss immunization with their health care provider in order to obtain the vaccine with a prescription.

Who should NOT get the 4CMenB vaccine?

If you or your child is allergic to the active substances or any of the other contents of the 4CMenB vaccine.

Speak with your health care provider if:

- you or your child has a high fever
- you or your child has hemophilia or any other condition that may slow down the clotting of the blood, such as treatment with blood thinners.
- you or your child has an allergy to latex. The tip cap of the syringe may contain natural rubber latex.
- you or your child has an allergy to the antibiotic kanamycin.

There is no need to delay getting immunized because of a cold or other mild illness. However, if you have concerns speak with your health care provider.

Possible side effects of the 4CMenB vaccine

Vaccines are very safe. It is much safer to get the vaccine than to get meningococcal disease.

The most common side effects are fever, soreness, redness and swelling where the vaccine was given.

In children up to 10 years of age:

- Fever is very common in young children (around 60 per cent), and if given with other routine childhood vaccines. The use of acetaminophen (ex. Tylenol®) immediately before and after vaccination (four to six hours after first dose) can be used in children under three years of age to reduce fever.

- Other common reactions include: unusual crying, loss of appetite, irritability, drowsiness, vomiting and diarrhea.
- Less common reactions (up to one in 100 people) include high fever, seizures (including febrile seizures), dry skin, itchy rash and paleness.

Individuals 11 years of age and older:

- The most common side effects include pain at the injection site resulting in the inability to perform daily activity, painful muscles and joints, nausea, generally feeling unwell and headache.

Acetylsalicylic Acid-ASA (ex. Aspirin®) should never be given to children because it can cause a severe liver and brain disease called Reye's Syndrome.

It is important to stay in the clinic for 15 minutes after getting any vaccine because there is an extremely rare possibility of a life-threatening allergic reaction called anaphylaxis. This may include hives, difficulty breathing, or swelling of the throat, tongue, or lips. If this happens after you leave the clinic, **call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department for immediate treatment.** This reaction can be treated and occurs in less than 1 in a million people who get a vaccine.

Report any serious or unexpected side-effects to a health care provider.

Your record of protection

Make sure your immunization provider updates your immunization record card or that of your child(ren), after you receive an immunization. Keep the card in a safe place!

All immunizations administered are recorded on an individual's immunization record in Manitoba's immunization registry. This registry:

- allows the health care provider to find out which immunizations you or your child(ren) have had or need to have;
- may be used to produce immunization records, or notify you or your health care provider if a particular immunization has been missed; and
- allows Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living and public health officials to monitor how well vaccines work in preventing disease.

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The Personal Health Information Act protects your information and/or that of your child(ren). You can have your personal health information and/or that of your child(ren) hidden from view from health care providers. For additional information, please contact your local public health office or speak with a health care provider.

If you need information on the immunizations that you or your child(ren) have received, contact your health care provider. Contact your local public health office for a copy of your or your child(ren)'s immunization records.

For a listing of public health offices please visit:
www.manitoba.ca/health/publichealth/offices.html

For more information on the 4CMenB vaccine:

Talk to your health care provider.

Call Health Links Info Santé in Winnipeg at 204-788-8200; toll free elsewhere in Manitoba 1-888-315-9257.

Or visit:

Manitoba Public Health website
www.manitoba.ca/health/publichealth/index.html

Public Health Agency of Canada
www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/im/index-eng.php

Please visit the Vaccine Factsheets and Resources webpage for the most current version:
www.manitoba.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/div/vaccines.html