

**It's serious:** Meningococcal disease, though rare, can cripple or kill, often without warning.

- **Unpredictable** – most cases occur at random, not in outbreaks; transmitted in crowded settings
- **Sudden onset** – difficult to diagnose; mimics symptoms of common illnesses
- **Rapidly progresses** – can lead to shock, coma, and death within 24 hours
- Even with proper treatment of those who are infected, **10%–15% die**
- 11%–19% of survivors suffer **lifelong disability** (hearing loss, amputation of arms or legs, or brain damage)

**It affects all ages, but especially adolescents and young adults.**

- 16–23 year olds: At highest risk among people older than 1 year of age

**It's preventable:** Meningococcal ACWY vaccine (MenACWY\*) is safe, effective, and recommended.

- **Not 1 shot but 2:** First dose of MenACWY at 11–12 years of age (*recommended since 2005*) **AND**
- **A second dose at 16 years of age** (*recommended since 2010*)

**Opportunities to give MenACWY are frequently missed when adolescents are already in the office.**

**Missed Opportunities for Administering MenACWY #1  
in Age-Eligible Patients** (*November 2006–June 2011*)<sup>1</sup>

Reason for Visit	Eligible patients (%) who did NOT receive MenACWY during visit
Preventive care (n = 1678)	57% (n = 954)
Vaccine-only (n = 527)	86% (n = 453)
Non-preventive care (n = 2944)	96% (n = 2821)

- Unfortunately, 86% of patients who were in the office for a “vaccine-only” visit did not receive the first dose of MenACWY along with other recommended vaccines.
- Timely vaccination remains a challenge in meningococcal disease prevention. **More than 60% of those eligible for the second dose at 16 years of age had not received it by 17 years of age.**<sup>2</sup>

**WHAT CAN YOU DO?**

- ▶ Recognize the increased risk of meningococcal disease in your adolescent patients.
- ▶ Make sure your adolescent patients (including those who are not college-bound) are vaccinated against meningococcal disease.
- ▶ Give the first dose of MenACWY at 11–12 years of age and the second dose at 16 years of age.

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\* MenACWY is a vaccine that helps protect against meningococcal disease resulting from infection with serogroups A, C, W, or Y.

## RECOMMEND!

- ▶ Make meningococcal disease prevention part of your anticipatory guidance for adolescent and young adult patients.

### Talking points

- Meningococcal disease is rare but can be deadly for young people your age.
  - You are at increased risk from your mid-to-late teens and into your early twenties.
  - Disease comes on suddenly, without warning, and can quickly become life-threatening.
  - Meningococcal vaccines are safe and effective.
  - 2 doses of MenACWY are recommended for adolescents your age.
- ▶ Your strong recommendation for MenACWY **will** make a difference.

## VACCINATE!

### ACIP Recommendations for MenACWY

Give dose #1 at 11–12 years of age AND dose #2 at 16 years of age

#### Recommendations if dose #1 is delayed:

- If dose #1 is delayed until 13–15 years of age, give dose #2 at 16 years of age.<sup>a</sup>
- If dose #1 is delayed until 16 years of age or older,<sup>b</sup> dose #2 is not recommended.

<sup>a</sup> The minimum interval between doses of MenACWY is 8 weeks. So it is acceptable to give the first dose at 15 years of age and the second dose at 16, as long as the minimum 8-week interval between doses is observed.

<sup>b</sup> Routine MenACWY vaccination of healthy persons who are not at increased risk for exposure to *Neisseria meningitidis* is not recommended after 21 years of age.

## REVIEW!

- ▶ Establish office protocols (e.g., screening tools) for identifying adolescents who need to be vaccinated.
- ▶ Make use of helpful management tools (reminder-recall systems, standing orders, immunization registries, electronic health record prompts) to track and improve your vaccination coverage.
- ▶ Don't miss opportunities! Train your staff to help identify teens who need vaccination.

**Consider every patient encounter an opportunity to vaccinate:**

- ✓ Acute care visits
- ✓ Well visits
- ✓ Sports and camp physicals
- ✓ Routine visits for chronic illness
- ✓ Visits for influenza vaccine

[www.give2menacwy.org](http://www.give2menacwy.org)

**REMEMBER: You're not done if you give just one!**

### References

1. Wong CA, Taylor JA, Wright JA, et al. Missed opportunities for adolescent vaccination, 2006–2011. *J Adolesc Health*. 2013;53(4):492–497.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National, regional, state, and selected local area vaccination coverage among adolescents aged 13–17 years – United States, 2016. *MMWR* 2017;66(33):874–82.