

# Important Information about **Meningococcal Group C Disease** and Meningococcal Group C Conjugate Vaccine

## PLEASE READ THIS CAREFULLY

### What is Meningococcal Group C disease?

- Meningococcal Group C disease is caused by a bacteria (*Neisseria meningitidis*) known as meningococcus.
- Many people carry the bacteria at the back of their throat or nose without being sick.
- This bacteria sometimes overcomes the body's natural defences and causes serious illnesses, including meningitis (infection of the lining of the brain) and meningococemia (a widespread infection involving the blood and multiple organs). If either of these illnesses occurs, this is called Invasive Meningococcal Disease (IMD), which is life-threatening.
- Group C is one of several strains of these bacteria that cause meningococcal disease.
- Some children can become deaf or suffer from kidney damage, amputations, or hearing loss as a result of meningococcal disease.
- It is preventable through immunization.

### What is Meningococcal Group C conjugate vaccine?

- Meningococcal Group C conjugate vaccine is intended for the prevention of illness caused by the group C strain of meningococcus.
- It provides protection only against disease caused by the group C strain.
- It does not protect against other strains of this bacteria or other organisms that cause meningitis or septicemia.
- The vaccine is given by injection. It cannot cause meningococcal disease because it contains no live bacteria.

### Who should receive the Meningococcal Group C conjugate vaccine?

- The Nova Scotia Routine Immunization Schedules for Children, Youth & Adults recommends that this vaccine be given to babies 12 months of age.
- People who may be exposed to the meningococcus bacteria, and people who are at high risk of catching meningococcal disease, should consider getting this vaccine.

### CAUTION

*SOME PEOPLE SHOULD CHECK WITH A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER BEFORE THEY RECEIVE THIS VACCINE:*

- People who have thrombocytopenia or other bleeding disorders

### Who should NOT receive the Meningococcal Group C conjugate vaccine?

- People who have had a serious allergic reaction to a previous dose or any component of Meningococcal Group C conjugate vaccine
- People who are sick or have a fever (temperature of 38.5°C/101.3°F or greater)

*Please read other side.*

# What to Expect Following Immunization with **Meningococcal Group C Conjugate Vaccine**

## INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

This vaccine is important in protecting your child from Meningococcal Group C disease.

***People should stay in the clinic for at least 15 minutes after receiving any type of immunization to monitor possible reaction. As with any vaccine there is a slight possibility that a more serious reaction could occur.***

### **What are the possible side effects of the Meningococcal Group C conjugate vaccine?**

Many children have no side effects from the vaccine. However, some may experience:

- Soreness, redness or swelling around the injection site.
- Fever and irritability, which have been reported in younger children. Fever may happen 4–6 hours after immunization, but lasts no longer than 24 hours.

***As fever may occur, make sure you have acetaminophen or ibuprofen at home. Follow the instructions that come with the product. These medications should not be taken if your child has certain medical conditions. Talk to your health care provider about your child's medical history before using either of these medications.***

### **Call your health care provider if:**

- The fever lasts longer than 24 hours.
- Your child has a temperature of 38.5°C (101.3°F) or greater.
- The fever does not come down after acetaminophen or ibuprofen is taken.
- Your child has a seizure.
- Your child appears ill with other symptoms.

### **Questions?**

If you have any questions regarding Meningococcal Group C disease or Meningococcal Group C conjugate vaccine, please call your local Public Health office (see list of offices here: [www.nshealth.ca/public-health-offices](http://www.nshealth.ca/public-health-offices)), or your health care provider.

For more information on immunization, please visit the websites of

- Nova Scotia Health, Public Health at <https://www.nshealth.ca/public-health/immunizations>
- Immunize Canada at [immunize.ca/en/default.aspx](http://immunize.ca/en/default.aspx)
- the Public Health Agency of Canada at [phac-aspc.gc.ca](http://phac-aspc.gc.ca)
- the Canadian Paediatric Society at [cps.ca](http://cps.ca)
- 811 at <https://811.novascotia.ca/>