



Updated: September 3, 2026

INFORMATION SHEET

Meningococcal Conjugate Quadrivalent Vaccine (Men-C-ACYW)

What is the Men-C-ACYW Vaccine?

The Men-C-ACYW vaccine is a safe and effective way to keep you or your child from getting very sick from 4 different strains (A,C,Y, and W-135) of bacteria that cause meningococcal disease. The vaccine is made with a small amount of dead bacteria that will not cause disease but can help the immune system learn how to protect itself against the bacteria if it enters the body.

What is meningococcal disease?

Meningococcal disease is an infection caused by bacteria. The two most severe and common forms of meningococcal disease are meningitis and septicemia.

Meningitis is an infection that causes swelling of the lining around the brain and spinal cord.

Symptoms include:

- Stiff neck
- Fatigue
- Fever
- Headache
- Vomiting
- Seizures

Septicemia is a bloodstream infection, sometimes referred to as blood poisoning. The bacteria can get in the blood and spread through the body, infecting organs such as the heart, kidney and brain. Septicemia is a life-threatening condition requiring urgent care.

Meningococcal disease can cause lifelong impairments such as:

- Brain damage
- Hearing loss
- Amputation of limbs

Meningococcal disease can be deadly even with prompt medical treatment.

Immunization is the best way to protect you and your child from getting meningococcal disease.

In the NWT, children are recommended to receive Men-C-ACYW at 2 and 12 months of age.

It is also recommended for anyone in grade 12 planning on attending post-secondary education or military recruits living in a congregate setting.

How is meningococcal disease spread?

People spread Meningococcal bacteria to others through direct contact with respiratory secretions, like saliva or mucus through:

- Coughing
- Sneezing
- Face to face contact
- Kissing
- Sharing toys, food, drinks, water bottles and instruments

Infants, teens and young adults are at an increased risk of meningococcal disease.

If you are unsure if you or your child should receive Men-C-ACYW, book an appointment with your local public health or health care provider to discuss vaccination eligibility.

Who should get the Men-C-ACYW vaccine?

In the NWT, the Men-C-ACYW vaccine is recommended for all children at 2 and 12 months of age.

The Men-C-ACYW-vaccine is publicly funded for grade 12 students attending post-secondary education, or military recruits who will be living in a congregate setting. In addition, people living with immuno-compromising conditions or are taking immune suppressing medications are also eligible to receive the vaccine at no charge.

If you do not fall into one of the categories above, you may still be eligible to receive the vaccine, however there may be a cost associated with receiving it.

You may also be eligible for this vaccine if you are traveling to certain areas where invasive meningococcal disease (IMD) is endemic. Talk to your health care provider for more information.

What are possible side effects to the Men-C-ACYW vaccine?

Vaccines, like any medicine, can have side effects. Side effects, if they occur, are usually mild and go away within a few days. You can give medication for pain/fever if needed. Check with your health care provider if you have concerns or need advice about which medications to give. Mild side effects include: swelling, redness, and soreness where you got the vaccine.

Other side effects can include:

- Fever,
- Drowsiness,
- Headache,
- Muscle or joint ache,
- Rash,
- Irritability, and
- Loss of appetite or an upset stomach.

Who should NOT get the Men-C-ACYW vaccine?

- Please contact your health care provider for more information.

To find out more about the Men-C-ACYW vaccine, contact your local health unit or visit the following links:

- **NWT Immunization Schedule:** www.gov.nt.ca/nwtimmunizationschedule
- **Immunize Canada** <https://immunize.ca>
- To track of your family's immunizations and to receive vaccine schedule reminders download the [CANImmunize App](#).

It is important to stay in the clinic for 15 minutes after getting any vaccine because there is a rare possibility of a severe allergic reaction. This usually happens soon after vaccination and may include: **hives, difficulty breathing, or swelling of the throat, tongue or lips.**

If this happens after you leave the clinic, call or go to the nearest Emergency Department or health centre for immediate treatment.

Please report any serious or unexpected side-effects to your healthcare provider