

Meningococcal Disease Information

Meningococcal disease is a rare, but potentially deadly, bacterial infection that can take the form of meningitis. Teenagers and college students are at risk for this disease due to lifestyle factors. Meningococcal bacteria are transmitted through air droplets and/or by direct contact with secretions from infected persons. Meningococcal disease is often misdiagnosed, since symptoms are similar to those of common viral illnesses. Symptoms may include a high fever, severe headache, stiff neck, nausea, vomiting, sensitivity to light, confusion, exhaustion and/or a rash. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend routine meningococcal immunization for 11-12 years old, adolescents at high school entry (15 year olds), if they have not previously been immunized, and for college freshmen living in dormitories. For more information, please go to School Nurse Web page, your healthcare provider or your local public health department.