



Durham Region Health Department **Facts about...**



Meningococcal Quadrivalent Conjugate (Men-C-ACYW-135) Vaccine

What is it?

Meningococcal quadrivalent conjugate (Men-C-ACYW-135) vaccine protects against four types of bacteria (A, C, Y and W-135) that cause meningococcal disease. Swelling of the lining of the brain and spinal cord (meningitis) and/or a blood infection are the most common types of illnesses. For more information, see [Facts About...Meningitis](#).

There are several types of meningococcal vaccines available in Canada, including Menactra[®], Menveo[®] and Nimenrix[®].

Men-C-ACYW-135 is different from meningococcal C vaccines (e.g., Menjugate[®]) and meningococcal B vaccines (e.g., Bexsero[®]). Talk to your health care provider for more information.

How effective is the vaccine?

- Men-C-ACYW-135 is 80% to 85% effective in adolescents within the first three to four years of vaccination, but protection decreases over time.
- Additional Men-C-ACYW-135 vaccines are required for high risk individuals, depending on their age at the first dose. Booster doses are recommended every 3 to 5 years for high risk individuals under 6 years of age and every 5 years for high risk individuals 7 years of age or older.

Who should get the vaccine?

The following people are able to receive the **Men-C-ACYW-135 vaccine for free**:

- Grade 7 to 12 students through the school-based immunization program.
- People who are at more risk of the disease because of chronic health issues.
- People who have been in contact with someone with meningitis.
- People who come from or are travelling to an area where meningitis is widespread.
- People born on or after January 1, 1997 who has never received a publicly funded dose.

The vaccine may be recommended for others at risk for the disease, however the vaccine would have to be purchased. Talk to your health care provider or check with your private health insurance if you are not eligible to receive the vaccine for free.



What is the schedule for the vaccine?

- One dose of the Men-C-ACYW-135 vaccine is routinely given to students in grade 7 through the school-based immunization program.

Under the **Immunization of School Pupils Act**, one dose of Men-C-ACYW-135 vaccine is **required** for children attending school in Ontario unless they have a valid exemption*.

Are there side effects with the vaccine?

- Men-C-ACYW-135 vaccine is safe. Side effects are usually mild and last a short time.
- The most common side effects are redness, pain and swelling where the needle was given.
- If you think a serious reaction is developing, seek medical attention right away. Any unusual or significant changes in your health or your child's health after the immunization should be reported to a health care provider and the Health Department.

Who should **NOT** get the vaccine?

- If you have a severe allergy (anaphylaxis) to any previous vaccine(s) or to any component of the vaccines.
- If you have received a meningococcal quadrivalent conjugate vaccine (e.g. Menactra®) within the last 5 years.
- If you received a meningococcal conjugate vaccine (e.g. Men-C-C) within the last 4 weeks.

For more information on contents of vaccine refer to the [Canadian Immunization Guide, Evergreen Edition](#).

Don't forget to update your immunization record!

After you or your child receives a vaccine, update your immunization record (yellow card). For children in school or child care, call the Health Department to update your child's immunization record. Keep immunization records in a safe place.

*Parents must contact the Health Department if you object to immunization based on conscious or religious beliefs, or if your child cannot be immunized for medical reasons.

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