



## Vaccination — The Best Protection

Vaccination has been available for decades as a safe and effective way to help prevent meningococcal meningitis.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other leading medical groups recommend meningococcal vaccine for:

- Preteens and teens 11 through 18 years of age
- College freshmen living in dormitories
- Children 2 through 10 years of age who are at increased risk or if elected by their health-care providers and parents

Vaccination is available for people 2 through 55 years of age who wish to reduce their risk for contracting the disease.

Ask your child's school nurse about meningitis prevention or call your health-care provider to schedule a vaccination appointment.

## Every Health-Care Visit Is A Vaccination Opportunity

Health officials recommend preteens and teens 11 through 18 years of age and college freshmen living in dormitories receive the meningococcal vaccine.

Opportunities to get your preteen and teen vaccinated include:

- Routine visits
- Sports physicals
- Pre-adolescent health-care visits
- Annual back-to-school check ups
- Pre-college physicals
- Sick visits for minor illnesses

## The Many Voices of Meningitis

The National Association of School Nurses' (NASN) *Voices of Meningitis* educational initiative shows why preventing meningococcal meningitis is so important. School nurses have united as *Voices of Meningitis* to raise awareness about this potentially devastating disease and encourage parents to get their children vaccinated.

Visit  
[VoicesOfMeningitis.org](http://VoicesOfMeningitis.org)

Make an appointment  
to have your child  
vaccinated today.

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*Voices of Meningitis* is a program of the National Association of School Nurses in collaboration with sanofi pasteur.

  
National Association of School Nurses



# VOICES OF MENINGITIS™

A Meningococcal Disease Prevention Campaign  
from the National Association of School Nurses

In collaboration with sanofi pasteur

## Giving Voice to Meningitis Prevention

## Hear From Some *Voices of Meningitis* About Why Vaccination Is So Important.



**Olga Pasick,**  
Mother

"My son didn't have to die. If David had been vaccinated, he might still be here today."



**Shara Johnson,**  
Mother

"My son lost his feet and fingers to a disease I knew nothing about. Every parent should talk to their child's health-care provider about vaccination."



**Carolina Sandoval, RN, PNP**  
School Nurse

"The more we empower families with information about meningitis, the better chance we have to fight this potentially devastating disease."



**Carye Wynn,**  
Meningitis Survivor

"I was in the hospital for a month and on life support for 15 days. My surviving meningitis was a miracle."

To hear more *Voices of Meningitis*, visit [VoicesOfMeningitis.org](http://VoicesOfMeningitis.org).

# Preteens and Teens are at Greater Risk

## Get Preteens And Teens Vaccinated

Many preteens, teens, and their parents don't understand the seriousness of meningococcal disease, which includes meningitis, or that health officials recommend preteens and teens be vaccinated.

**Although rare, meningococcal meningitis is very serious and can cause death or disability in just a single day.**

Preteens and teens are at greater risk for contracting the disease, which can potentially be prevented through vaccination. Help protect preteens and teens by getting them vaccinated.

## Meningococcal Meningitis Is Very Serious

Meningococcal disease can present with meningitis (swelling of the brain or spinal cord) or meningococemia (blood infection). The disease can be difficult to recognize, especially in its early stages, because symptoms are similar to those of more common viral illnesses. But unlike more common illnesses, the disease moves quickly and can cause death or disability in just a single day.

In fact, about 10% of the 1000 to 2600 Americans who get meningococcal meningitis each year will die. Death rates are up to 5 times higher among teenagers and young adults (15 through 24 years of age) compared with other age groups. Of those who survive, 1 in 5 is left with serious medical problems, including:

- Amputation of arms, legs, fingers, and toes
- Brain damage
- Deafness
- Kidney damage

## Why Preteens And Teens Are At Greater Risk

Certain lifestyle factors are thought to put preteens and teens at greater risk for infection, including:

- Sharing drinking glasses, eating utensils, or water bottles
- Being in crowded situations for prolonged periods of time
- Kissing
- Not getting enough sleep
- Smoking (or being exposed to smoke)
- Living in close quarters (eg, dormitories, boarding schools, and sleep-away camps)

**These common everyday activities can put even healthy individuals at greater risk for getting meningococcal meningitis.**



**Bob and Dee Dee Werner,**  
Parents

"Becky started feeling sick on Tuesday and by Wednesday she was gone. It happens that fast. That's why vaccination is so important."



**Amy Purdy,**  
Meningitis Survivor

"I lost both of my legs, my kidneys, my spleen, part of my hearing, and almost my life to meningitis. And I'm one of the lucky ones."