

Meningococcal Disease

What is meningococcal disease?

- Meningococcal disease is any illness caused by the bacteria *Neisseria meningitidis*.
- It is the leading cause of bacterial meningitis in children 2-18 years of age in U.S.
- Meningococcal disease can be very serious, even life-threatening in 48 hours or less.
- The two most severe and common illnesses caused by meningococcal bacteria include;
 - Meningitis - an infection of the fluid and lining around the brain and spinal cord
 - Septicemia - a bloodstream infection

What are the symptoms?

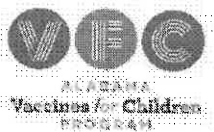
- Symptoms of meningococcal disease are similar to influenza (flu) and may include:
 - Sudden onset of a high fever
 - Headache
 - Stiff neck
 - Nausea
 - Vomiting
 - Increased sensitivity to light
 - Rash
 - Confusion
 - Severe aches and pain in the muscles, joints, chest or belly

How does meningococcal disease spread?

- Meningococcal disease is spread person to person by sharing respiratory secretions, through kissing or coughing, close or lengthy contact, and among people who share a room or live in the same household.
- Anyone can get meningococcal disease, but teens and college freshmen who live in residence halls are at increased risk.
- Some people can “carry” meningococcal bacteria in their nose and throat without getting meningococcal disease, but can still infect other people.
- Most cases of meningococcal disease are spread by people who “carry” the bacteria with no symptoms, appear to be random, and not linked to other cases.
- Meningococcal outbreaks can occur in communities, schools, colleges, prisons, and in other high risk populations.

Where can I find more information?

- Ask your doctor.
- Call the Alabama Department of Public Health, Immunization Division, at 1-800-469-4599.
- Go to cdc.gov and type meningococcal disease in SEARCH box.



Alabama Department of Public Health

Immunization Division, 201 Monroe St, Montgomery, AL 36104

1-800-469-4599 www.adph.org/imm 2/29/16

Meningococcal Vaccine

Who should get meningococcal vaccine?

- Meningococcal vaccine(s) is recommended for all preteens and teens.
- All 11 and 12 year olds should be vaccinated with serogroups A, C, W, and Y meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV4). A booster dose is recommended at age 16.
- Teens and young adults, 16 through 23 year olds, may also be vaccinated with a serogroup B meningococcal vaccine (SBMV), preferably at 16 through 18 years old.
- Both MCV4 and SBMV can be given at the same time, talk to your provider.
- Teens with HIV should get three doses of MCV4.
- People 55 years of age and older should get Meningococcal polysaccharide vaccine (MPSV4).

Who should be vaccinated because they are at increased risk?

- College freshmen living in dormitories.
- Laboratory personnel exposed to meningococcal bacteria.
- U.S. military recruits.
- Anyone traveling or living where meningococcal disease is common, like Africa.
- Anyone with a damaged spleen or who had the spleen removed.
- Anyone with an immune system disorder.
- Anyone exposed during a meningococcal meningitis outbreak.

What are the vaccine side effects and risks?

- MCV4 and SBMV are safe, but side effects can occur.
- Most side effects are mild or moderate and do not affect daily activities.
- The most common side effects in preteens and teens occur where the injection is given and may include pain, tenderness, swelling, and hardness of the skin.
- Other common side effects may include nausea, feeling a little run down, and headache.
- Some preteens and teens may also faint after getting a vaccine.
- Reactions usually last a short time and get better within a few days.

Where can I find more information?

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- Call the Alabama Department of Public Health, Immunization Division, at 1-800-469-4599.
- Go to cdc.gov and type meningococcal vaccine in SEARCH box.



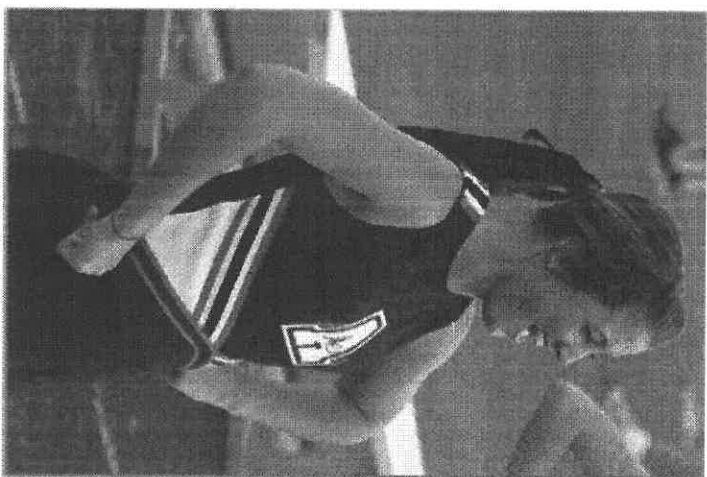
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Jessica Elkins

Jessica Elkins was a healthy, fifteen-year old living in Athens, Alabama in November of 2007. She was a JV cheerleader and loved spending time with her friends and family. On December 21, after taking her final math exam, Jessica appeared fine. Right after lunch she began feeling sick and was taken to the local doctor. They diagnosed her with the flu and sent her home. The next day, her mother saw that she had tiny bruises all over her body. They rushed her to Decatur General Hospital where she was diagnosed with meningitis and then was mediflighted to Birmingham Children's Hospital. The doctor was very honest and told us that many children die from this, but because we got her there so fast she had a better chance. While there her stats would improve and then drastically fall. On December 26th, the nurse checked her eyes and ran to get the doctor. Her brain was dead. Jessica passed away on December 26, 2007. PLEASE get your child vaccinated. No parent or family wants to go through a tragedy like this.

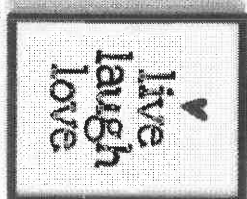


Our mission is to save lives. Please tell your friends!

- Google "Jessica Elkins" to read more about her story.
- Visit National Meningitis Association (www.nmaus.org)
- Visit Meningitis Angels online to read other victims' stories. (www.meningitis-angels.org)

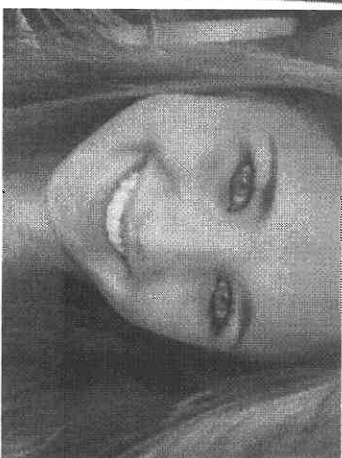
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*The disease that kills before you
know you have it.*

Meningitis Awareness

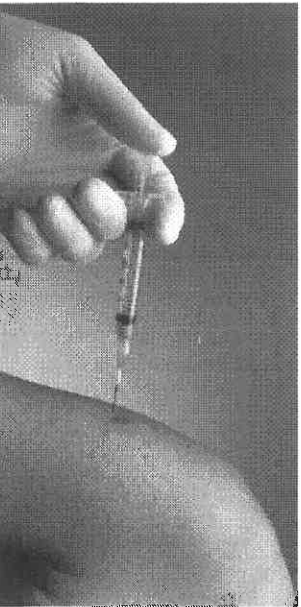


Jessica Michelle Elkins
September 23, 1992—December 26, 2007

Meningitis: The Disease



* Meningitis is an inflammation of the meninges, the membranes that cover the brain and spinal cord. It is usually caused by certain medications or illnesses. Bacterial meningitis is rare, but is usually serious and can be life-threatening if it's not treated right away. Viral meningitis is relatively common and far less serious. It often goes undiagnosed because it's symptoms are a lot like the common flu. Kids of any age can get meningitis, but because it can be easily spread between people living in close quarters, teens, college students and boarding-students are at higher risk. Each year, meningococcal disease strikes nearly 3,000 Americans, and 10 to 12 percent of those will die. Up to 20 percent of survivors have long-term disabilities, such as a brain damage, hearing loss, or limb amputations.



* Sources: www.kidshhealth.org

The National Meningitis Association, Inc.

Symptoms

* The symptoms of meningitis vary and depend both on the age of the child and on the cause of the infection. Because the flu-like symptoms can be similar in both types of meningitis, particularly in the early stages, and bacterial meningitis can be very serious, it's important to quickly diagnose an infection. Warning signs in infants include: high pitch moaning, dislike of being held, fretting, lethargic, refusing food, vomiting, difficult to wake, high temperatures, purplish rash, and blank stare. Warning signs for adults and children include: headaches, drowsiness, disorientation, dislike of light, seizures, high temperatures, joint pain, stiff neck, and purplish rash. Some, none, or all of these symptoms may present themselves. Once the infection starts, it can spread rapidly through the body!

Prevention

Immunization can prevent the majority of meningococcal disease cases in adolescents and young adults. Vaccination protects against four of the five major strains of the bacteria responsible for meningococcal disease in the U.S. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends meningococcal immunization (one shot) for all adolescents 11 through 18 of age. Others who wish to be immunized should speak to their health care provider. Vaccination offers the best protection against the disease.

Find Out More

* For more information about meningococcal disease and immunization, visit these websites:

National Meningitis Association

www.nmaus.org

American Academy of Family Physicians

www.aafp.org

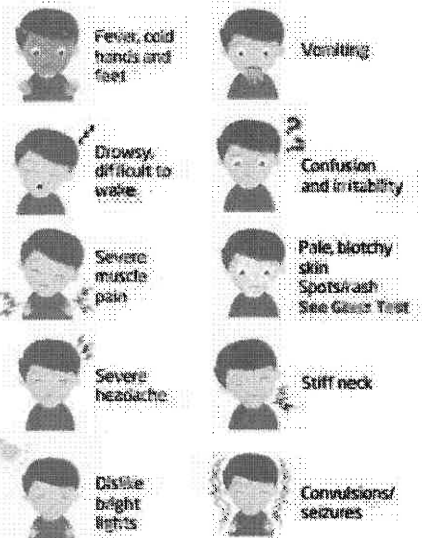
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

www.cdc.gov

National Foundation of Infectious Diseases

www.nfid.org

Children and Adults



Be aware

Meningitis and septicaemia often happen together. Be aware of all the signs and symptoms.

Symptoms can appear in any order. Some may not appear at all.

Early symptoms can include:

- fever
- headache
- vomiting
- muscle pain
- fever with cold hands and feet

Someone with meningitis or septicaemia can get a lot worse very quickly. Keep checking them.

Trust your instincts - get medical help immediately

Babies and Toddlers

