



# CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY

## Student Health Advisory and Notification

The following information is offered as a guide to assist you in understanding the meningococcal disease and immunization benefits. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) issued these recommendations on the use of polysaccharide meningococcal vaccine to prevent bacterial meningitis. The incidence of meningitis is relatively rare, about 1 case per 100,000 persons per year however, recent studies done by the CDC and American College Health Association (ACHA) found that the cases of meningococcal disease are three to four times higher among college freshmen that live in dormitories. The Menomune Vaccine is effective against the four kinds of bacteria that cause about two thirds of meningococcal disease in the United States.

### **What Is Meningococcal Meningitis?**

Meningococcal meningitis is a potentially fatal bacterial infection that causes inflammation of the membranes surrounding the brain and spinal cord. It is caused by the bacterium *Neisseria meningitidis*.

### **How Is The Disease Spread? How Can College Students Protect Themselves?**

The infection is spread by direct contact such as sharing drinking glasses, eating utensils and cigarettes, or kissing. Meningitis infection is also spread through the exchange of respiratory secretions, like coughing or sneezing. Social aspects of college life appear to increase risk factors. Smoking, excessive alcohol consumption and bar patronage increase the chances that one will contract meningitis from an infected individual.

### **What Are The Symptoms?**

Symptoms are similar to those of influenza; however, high fever, severe headache, stiff neck, rash, nausea, vomiting, confusion, and lethargy are symptoms that may alert the student to serious complications. The infection can lead to permanent disabilities, such as hearing loss, brain damage and/or death. The symptoms can develop over several hours or may take 1 to 2 days. However, due to the rapid onset of the disease, it is very important to seek immediate medical attention and early diagnosis if experiencing these symptoms. Diagnosis is usually done by testing the spinal fluid for the bacteria.

### **Can Meningitis Be Treated?**

Bacterial meningitis can be treated with a number of effective antibiotics. It is important that treatment can be started early in the course of the disease.

### **Is There A Vaccine Against Meningococcal Disease?**

There is a safe, effective vaccine that can provide protection against four out of the five strains of the disease, serogroups A, C, Y, and W-135. There is currently no vaccine for serogroup B. These four strains cause up to 85% of meningococcal meningitis cases on college campuses. As with any vaccine, it may not protect 100% of susceptible individuals. Vaccine protection lasts for at least 3--5 years,

### **What Are The Side Effects Of The Vaccine? How Safe Is It?**

The meningococcal vaccine has an excellent safety profile. Side effects are mild and infrequent, consisting primarily of redness and swelling at the injection site and lasting up to two days. The immunization should be deferred during any acute illness. The vaccine should not be administered to individuals sensitive to Thimerosal (mercury derivative).

If you have ANY questions regarding the vaccine or disease please see your doctor or call the Student Health Center at (714)997-6851. More information can be found at the CDC website [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or the ACHA website [www.acha.org](http://www.acha.org)

Please Read and Sign

The Menomune Vaccine for *Neisseria meningitidis* is available at the Chapman University for a fee. We will keep this confidential file as part of your medical records in the SHC in accordance with Assembly Bill 1452. Please indicate your preference and acknowledgment of this information by signing below:

- I have already received the vaccination
- I am planning to receive this vaccine at: \_\_\_\_\_
- I am planning to receive this vaccine at Chapman University
- I do not want to use this vaccine

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian signature (if student under age 18): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_