Information about Meningococcal Group B Vaccine (MenB)

Three serogroups (groups, B, C, and Y), or strains, of meningococcal bacteria account for most cases of meningococcal disease in the United States. A vaccine that protects people against serogroups A, C, Y and W-135 has been available in the United States since 2005 and is recommended for adolescents and most college students. However, until recently, there was no serogroup B vaccine licensed for use in the United States.

On October 29, 2014, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) licensed the first serogroup B meningococcal vaccine (Trumenba®). FDA approved this vaccine for use in people 10-25 years of age as a 3-dose series. On January 23, 2015, FDA licensed a second serogroup B meningococcal vaccine (Bexsero®). FDA approved this vaccine for use in people 10-25 years of age as a 2-dose series.

In February 2015, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) voted to recommend serogroup B meningococcal vaccination for persons aged 10 years and older who are at increased risk for meningococcal disease due to one of these risk factors:

- Persons with persistent complement component deficiencies
- Persons with anatomic or functional asplenia
- Microbiologists routinely exposed to isolates of Neisseria meningitidis
- Persons identified to be at increased risk because of a serogroup B meningococcal disease outbreak

In June 2015, ACIP made an additional recommendation that the vaccine series may be administered to adolescents and young adults 16 through 23 years of age to provide short term protection against most strains of serogroup B meningococcal disease. The preferred age for vaccination is 16 through 18 years of age, prior to starting college.

Students should discuss the need for this vaccine with their health care provider, including a consideration of cost, risks and benefits of vaccination.

The two brands of vaccine are not interchangeable. If you start the vaccine series with one brand, you need to finish the series with the same brand of vaccine. CDC/ACIP and UHS do not favor or recommend one brand over the other.

UHS currently stocks both brands of MenB vaccine, and will administer the vaccine to students who request it. There is a charge that applies, and the student will be billed. The current UHS price is $141/dose for either vaccine. UHS does not bill third party insurance; your insurance plan may or may not reimburse you for the cost of this vaccine. Students who would like to receive the MenB vaccine at UHS should call 608-265-5600 to schedule an appointment in our immunization clinic. You may also receive the vaccine from your family medical provider.