



Meningitis Waiver Form

What is Bacterial Meningitis?

Meningitis is an inflammation and infection of the lining of the brain and spinal cord. Bacterial meningitis occurs rarely and sporadically throughout the year, although outbreaks tend to occur in late winter and early spring. In college age students, the illness may be due to an organism called meningococcal bacteria. Because meningococcal meningitis can cause grave illness and rapidly progress to death, it requires early diagnosis and treatment. Persons who have had intimate contact with someone who has been diagnosed with meningococcal meningitis should seek medical attention so they may get prophylactic therapy, which is a course of antibiotics. Untreated meningococcal meningitis can be fatal.

Where does it come from and how is it transmitted?

The meningococcal bacteria are found in nasal and oral secretions. People may harbor this organism, but never become ill. Others get quite ill with meningitis. This organism can be transmitted through close personal contact such as:

- Sharing drinking utensils
- Sharing the mouthpiece of a musical instrument
- Sneezing or coughing on someone
- Kissing on the lips
- Sharing eating utensils
- Sharing lipstick or chapstick
- Sharing cigarettes, cigars or pipes

Most people who become infected simply carry the organism harmlessly, without illness, and eliminate it from the nose and throat within a short time by developing natural immunity. At any one time, up to 10% of the normal population may be found carrying meningococcus without illness or symptoms. There is a vaccine available which covers you for 1-5 years. It is effective for strains A-C-Y and W-135 meningitis. These types account for two-thirds of meningitis cases among college students. A second meningitis vaccine which covers serotype B was FDA approved for use in the U.S.A. in 2014, but is not yet routinely recommended to date..

Routine vaccination

Based on CDC guidelines, two doses of MCV4 are recommended for adolescents 11 through 18 years of age: the first dose at 11 or 12 years of age, with a booster dose at age 16. If the first dose (or series) is given between 13 and 15 years of age, the booster should be given between 16 and 18. If the first dose (or series) is given after the 16th birthday, a booster is not needed.

I have read the above information about bacterial meningitis, the effectiveness of the vaccine, and the availability of a meningitis vaccine.

I have decided NOT to receive the meningitis vaccine.

Student Name (Print): _____

Student's Signature (Required): _____ DATE _____

For additional information contact the Student Health Center, Andre Hall at 570-208-5852 or visit us at http://www.kings.edu/life_at_kings/resources_for_success/health_center/meningitis_info