



STUDENT HEALTH CENTER

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January 5, 2009

Dear New Student,

Congratulations on your acceptance to the University of San Diego. The University is committed to protecting the health and well-being of all our students. To achieve that goal, we recommend that all students receive immunization or screening for the diseases below, and **REQUIRE** that **freshmen, transfer students, international students and/or anyone living on-campus** provide this information. If you are in one of the required student groups listed above, you must submit a completed Student Health Information Form (signed by a health care provider) in order to register for classes.

Required Vaccinations and Screening

- MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella)
- Hepatitis B
- Varicella (Chickenpox)
- Tuberculosis Screening
- Tetanus-Diphtheria-Pertussis

Please mail (not fax) the form, **completed and signed by a health care provider**, to the Student Health Center. If you wish to have your health care provider download a copy of the immunization form refer them to the following website: www.sandiego.edu/healthcenter. Forms should be mailed to the address above.

Other immunizations, including Meningococcal Vaccine, Hepatitis A Vaccine, and Gardasil(HPV) Vaccine are NOT REQUIRED for registration, but are recommended, and are available at the USD Student Health Center for a fee. Meningococcal disease is very rare, but can cause serious, life threatening illness. It sometimes occurs in small outbreaks, generally among groups in close settings such as a college dormitory. Students, who will live on campus, should seriously consider the advantages of vaccination. For more information about Meningococcal Vaccines, please see the Meningococcal information located on the back of this letter, or call your health care provider.

If you are under 18 on your start date for classes, your parent/guardian needs to sign below and return this letter with the immunization form.

In case of routine health examinations, immunizations, diagnostic procedures, treatment of illnesses and/or injuries, permission is hereby granted to treat the student named herein at the Student Health Center, University of San Diego, and to provide care and/or make necessary referrals.

Name of Student: _____

Student's Date of Birth: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____

Date _____

If you or your healthcare provider has questions, please contact any of the Health Center staff at 619-260-4595.

Kimberly Woodruff, MD, MPH
Supervising Physician, Student Health Center

MENINGOCOCCAL VACCINES

What is meningococcal disease?

Meningococcal disease is a serious illness, caused by a bacteria. It is a leading cause of bacterial meningitis in children 2-18 years old in the United States. Meningitis is an infection of fluid surrounding the brain and the spinal cord. Meningococcal disease also causes blood infections. About 2,600 people get meningococcal disease each year in the U.S. 10-15% of these people die, in spite of treatment with antibiotics. Of those who live, another 11-19% lose their arms or legs, become deaf, have problems with their nervous systems, become mentally retarded, or suffer seizures or strokes. Anyone can get meningococcal disease. But it is most common in infants less than one year of age and people with certain medical conditions, such as lack of a spleen. College freshmen who live in dormitories have an increased risk of getting meningococcal disease. Meningococcal infections can be treated with antibiotics. Still, about 1 out of every ten people who get the disease dies from it, and many others are affected for life. This is why *preventing* the disease through use of meningococcal vaccine is important for people at highest risk.

Meningococcal vaccine

Two meningococcal vaccines are available in the U.S.:

- **Meningococcal polysaccharide vaccine (MPSV4)** has been available since the 1970s.
- **Meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV4)** was licensed in 2005.

Both vaccines can prevent **4 types** of meningococcal disease, including 2 of the 3 types most common in the United States and a type that causes epidemics in Africa. Meningococcal vaccines cannot prevent all types of the disease. But they do protect many people who might become sick if they didn't get the vaccine. Both vaccines work well, and protect about 90% of those who get it. MCV4 is expected to give better, longer-lasting protection. MCV4 should also be better at preventing the disease from spreading from person to person.

Who should get meningococcal vaccine and when?

A dose of MCV4 is recommended for children and adolescents 11 through 18 years of age. This dose is normally given during the routine preadolescent immunization visit (at 11-12 years). But those who did not get the vaccine during this visit should get it at the earliest opportunity. Meningococcal vaccine is also recommended for other people at increased risk for meningococcal disease:

- College freshmen living in dormitories.
- Microbiologists who are routinely exposed to meningococcal bacteria.
- U.S. military recruits.
- Anyone traveling to, or living in, a part of the world where meningococcal disease is common, such as parts of Africa.
- Anyone who has a damaged spleen, or whose spleen has been removed.
- Anyone who has terminal complement component deficiency (an immune system disorder).
- People who might have been exposed to meningitis during an outbreak.

For more information about the pros and cons of the vaccine, talk with your health care provider or visit www.cdc.gov/vaccines