

Dear Student and Parents/Guardians:

In 2003 the Nebraska State Legislature passed a law mandating all entering students receive information regarding meningococcal disease, a rare infection with potentially devastating results. Meningococcal disease is a serious illness caused by a type of bacteria called *Neisseria meningitidis*. It can lead to meningitis (infection of the lining of the brain and spinal cord) and infections of the blood. Meningococcal disease often occurs without warning — even among people who are otherwise healthy. This infection occurs sporadically in clusters and is spread by close contact with infected individuals. Students living in dorms are in a high risk group.

There are at least 12 types of *N. meningitidis*, called “serogroups.” Serogroups A, B, C, W, and Y cause most meningococcal disease. Meningococcal ACWY vaccines can help prevent meningococcal disease caused by serogroups A, C, W, and Y (these strains caused 73% of all cases in those persons over 11 years of ages). A different meningococcal vaccine is available to help protect against serogroup B (which accounts for 1/3 of all cases of meningitis in teens and adults).

Please take a moment to read the other side of this paper explaining meningococcal disease and the vaccine information (specific information is available from the CDC regarding meningitis and each available vaccine via links provided). **Vaccination IS RECOMMENDED** for first year students living in dorms but is not required. Ask your physician or county health department about its availability. Students can get the vaccine at several local locations:

- **Public Health Solutions** • 995 East Highway 33, Suite 1, Crete, NE 68333 • 1-844-830-0813
Monthly FREE clinic on Beatrice Campus by appointment • 402-826-3880
- **Beatrice Community Hospital & Health Center Immunization Clinic** • Parkview Center, 1201 S. 9th St., Beatrice, NE • 402-223-2366
- **Milford Family Medical Center** • 119 South C Street, Milford, NE • 402-761-3307
- **Seward Family Medical Center** • 250 North Columbia Avenue, Seward, NE • 402-643-4800
- **University of Nebraska-Student Health Center** • 1500 U Street, Lincoln, NE • 402-472-5000

Contact your local hospitals, doctors’ offices, or Health and Human Service Agencies about the availability of payment assistance or indigent patient funds to assist qualified persons with the cost of the vaccine

After reading this information, please sign and detach the form below and return it to your campus Residence Life Manager acknowledging you have received the information and reviewed it. Students under the age of 19 must have a parent/guardian sign as well. Return address information for each campus is as follows (student can bring along the day of check-ins):

- **Beatrice Students:** Residence Life Manager • Southeast Community College • 4771 W. Scott Rd. • Beatrice, NE 68310
- **Milford Students:** Residence Life Manager • Southeast Community College • 621 State Street • Milford, NE 68405

MENINGOCOCCAL DISEASE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

This form acknowledges that I have received and reviewed information regarding meningococcal disease and vaccination provided by Southeast Community College.

Student’s

PRINTED Name: _____ **SCC ID #:** _____

Student’s Home Address: _____

Student’s Phone: _____ **Date:** ____/____/____

Student’s Signature: _____

Parent’s/Guardian’s Signature: _____

(required if student is under 19 years of age)

What is meningococcal meningitis?

Meningococcal disease is a rare but potentially fatal bacterial infection. The disease is expressed as either meningococcal meningitis, an inflammation of the membranes surrounding the brain and spinal cord or meningococemia, the presence of bacteria in the blood.

What causes meningococcal meningitis?

Meningococcal disease is caused by the bacterium *Neisseria meningitidis*, a leading cause of meningitis and septicemia (or blood poisoning) in the United States. Meningitis is one of the most common manifestations of the disease, although it has been known to cause septic arthritis, pneumonia, brain inflammation and other syndromes.

How many people die from meningococcal meningitis each year?

Meningococcal disease strikes about 3000 Americans each year and is responsible for approximately 300 deaths annually. It is estimated that 100 to 125 cases of meningococcal disease occur annually on college campuses and 5 to 15 students die as a result.

How is meningococcal meningitis spread?

Meningococcal disease is transmitted through the air via droplets of respiratory secretions and direct contact with an infected person. Direct contact, for these purposes is defined as oral contact with shared items such as cigarettes or drinking glasses or through intimate contact such as kissing.

What are the symptoms?

The early symptoms usually associated with meningococcal disease include fever, severe headache, stiff neck, rash, nausea, vomiting and lethargy, and may resemble the flu. Because the disease progresses rapidly, often in as little as 12 hours, students are urged to seek medical care immediately if they experience two or more of these symptoms concurrently.

Who is at risk?

Recent evidence found students residing on campus in dormitories appear to be at higher risk for meningococcal disease than college students overall. Further research recently released by the CDC shows freshmen living in dormitories have a six times higher risk of meningococcal disease than college students overall. Although anyone can come in contact with the bacteria that causes meningococcal disease, data also indicates certain social behaviors, such as exposure to passive and active smoking, bar patronage, and excessive alcohol consumption, may put students at increased risk for the disease.

How often do outbreaks occur in on college campuses?

From 2013-2017, there were 25 instances of non-serogroup B infections on U.S. college campuses (two considered outbreaks). Instances of serogroup B meningococcal disease occurred on 20 college campuses from March 2013 to November 2017. Of those, five college campuses experienced outbreaks of serogroup B meningococcal disease between 2013 to 2016. At least three additional U.S. college outbreaks happened between 2008 and 2011.

What is ACHA's recommendation on meningococcal disease?

ACHA Vaccine-Preventable Diseases Task Force recommends that undergraduate college students, particularly freshmen who live in or plan to live in dormitories or resident hall, consider getting the vaccine to reduce the risk of meningococcal disease.

Does the CDC recommend vaccination for college students?

As of October 20, 1999, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that college students, particularly those who live in or plan to live in dormitories or residence halls, be provided information about Meningococcal disease and the benefits of vaccination.

Why should college students consider vaccination with the meningococcal vaccine?

Pre-exposure vaccination enhances immunity to four strains of meningococcal that cause 65-70 percent of invasive disease and therefore reduces a student's risk of disease. Development of immunity post-vaccination requires 7-10 days. Although vaccination can prevent the majority of cases, it is important to remember that no vaccine is 100 percent effective.

Southeast Community College recommends that you consult with your family physician regarding a vaccine.

Additional information on Meningococcal Meningitis is available from The Centers for Disease Control

Meningitis Information: <https://www.cdc.gov/meningitis/index.html>

Meningococcal ACWY Vaccines: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/vis-statements/mening.html>

Serogroup B Meningococcal (MenB): <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/vis-statements/mening-serogroup.html>