

# NEEDLE TIPS

from the Immunization Action Coalition — [www.immunize.org](http://www.immunize.org)

## ACIP Expands Recommendations for the Use of Meningococcal Serogroup B Vaccine to Include Adolescents and Young Adults

Two serogroup B meningococcal (MenB) vaccines were recently licensed by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for use in people age 10–25 years. MenB-FHbp (Trumenba; Pfizer Inc.) was licensed in October 2014, and MenB-4C (Bexsero; GSK) in January 2015.

On October 23, 2015, *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)* published “Use of Serogroup B Meningococcal Vaccines in Adolescents and Young Adults: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), 2015,” available at [www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/wk/mm6441.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/wk/mm6441.pdf), pages 1171–6. These recommendations were voted upon and approved at the June 2015 ACIP meeting.

The recommendations state that adolescents and young adults age 16–23 may be vaccinated with MenB vaccine to provide short-term protection against most strains of serogroup B meningococcal disease. The preferred age for MenB vaccination is 16–18 years.

The new MenB recommendations are classified as Category B, meaning the recommendations allow for individual clinical decision making. (Vaccines with Category A recommendations are made for all persons in an age- or risk-factor-based group.) The Category B classification enables coverage by the Vaccines For Children program and most insurance plans.

MenB vaccine should be administered either as a 3-dose series of MenB-FHbp (Trumenba) or a 2-dose series of MenB-4C (Bexsero). The two MenB vaccines are not interchangeable; the same vaccine product must be used for all doses. On the basis of available data and expert opinion, MenB-FHbp or MenB-4C may be administered concomitantly with other vaccines indicated for this age, but at a different anatomic site, if feasible.

In addition to the Category B recommendation for adolescents and young adults, CDC also has issued recommendations for routine use (i.e., Category A) of MenB vaccines in certain groups of people at increased risk for serogroup B meningococcal disease. (Available at [www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/wk/mm6422.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/wk/mm6422.pdf), pages 608–612)

These groups include:

- People age 10 years and older who have functional or anatomic asplenia
- People age 10 years and older who have persistent complement component deficiency
- People age 10 years and older who are at risk during an outbreak caused by a vaccine serogroup, such as on college campuses
- Microbiologists who work with meningococcus bacteria in a laboratory

Even though both MenB vaccines are FDA-licensed for people 10 through 25 years of age, ACIP recommends the vaccines can be used off-label for those at increased risk of serogroup B meningococcal disease who are 26 years of age or older.

In contrast to meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV4 [MenACWY]) recommendations, MenB vaccine is not routinely recommended for college students or international travelers.

Q&As regarding the use of both MCV4 and MenB in adolescents are available on the CDC website at [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/mening-faqs-hcp-adolescent-vaccine.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/mening-faqs-hcp-adolescent-vaccine.html).

which the polysaccharide is chemically bonded (“conjugated”) to a protein to produce better protection. MCV4 is more effective in young children than the original polysaccharide vaccine.

More recently, vaccines have become available that offer protection from meningococcal serogroup B. These vaccines are composed of proteins also found on the surface of the bacteria. Neither type of vaccine contains live meningococcal bacteria.

MPSV4 and MCV4 provide no protection against serogroup B disease, and meningococcal serogroup

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## Ask the Experts

*The Immunization Action Coalition extends thanks to our experts, medical officer Andrew T. Kroger, MD, MPH, and nurse educator Donna L. Weaver, RN, MN, both with the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).*

### Meningococcal vaccines

**What meningococcal vaccines are currently available in the United States?**

Since 2005, 2 types of meningococcal vaccines have been available in the United States that protect against meningococcal serogroups A, C, W, and Y: 1) meningococcal polysaccharide vaccine (MPSV4; Menomune, Sanofi Pasteur), which is made up of polysaccharide (sugar molecules) from the surface of the meningococcal bacteria; and 2) meningococcal conjugate vaccines (MCV4; Menactra, Sanofi Pasteur; Menveo, GSK) in

### Immunization questions?

- ▶ Email [nipinfo@cdc.gov](mailto:nipinfo@cdc.gov)
- ▶ Call your state health department (phone numbers at [www.immunize.org/coordinators](http://www.immunize.org/coordinators))