



Information for School and Sporting Events

Can students/athletes still travel to various school or sporting events if they haven't received the vaccine?

Yes, definitely. These events do not increase the risk of getting the disease.

All students should follow the same hygiene rules: do not share anything that has been in your mouth. This includes water bottles, lip balm, food or anything else. Cover your mouth when you cough. Sneeze into a tissue, and throw it away.

These are simple hygiene rules that also prevent the spread of other diseases that are more common than meningitis.

Can students/athletes get the bacteria from a person's sweat during a sporting event?

No. This has never been reported.

Does the new vaccination program mean that my child is at higher risk?

No. The bacterium is common and up to one in three people carries it. It is very rare for it to make anyone sick. The risk to people is no higher now than before the recent cases of meningococcal disease.

What is the best thing to do to prevent my child from getting this disease?

Talk to your child about good hygiene - not sharing water bottles, lip balm, candy, drinks, food, or anything else that has been in his or her mouth. Teach your child to cover his or her mouth when coughing, and to sneeze into a tissue.

In addition, the vaccine will protect your child over the long term.

Will students/athletes who are traveling during March break receive the vaccine before they go?

Many will. It depends on how long it takes to start the vaccination program in each community. Traveling does not put children at higher risk, nor does attending sports or school events.

Can people from the two communities with meningococcal cases still have the bacteria?

Everyone who was in close contact with the sick children took antibiotics to kill the bacteria. They were also immunized right away. Since all children in the two communities have been immunized, they are the least likely to have the bacteria.

It is important to note that this bacterium is common - up to one in three people carry it. However, in very rare cases it can cause meningitis and other related diseases.

Should we be concerned about being in close contact with people from these communities?

No, because children from these communities have been vaccinated. They can participate fully in all school and sports related events.

Can my child contract meningitis by being around people who were near the children who got sick?

No. Everyone who was exposed to the sick children took antibiotics to kill the bacteria, and then took the vaccine right away. They cannot spread the bacteria.

How can I learn more?

Call your local health centre and talk to your nurse/doctor.

