

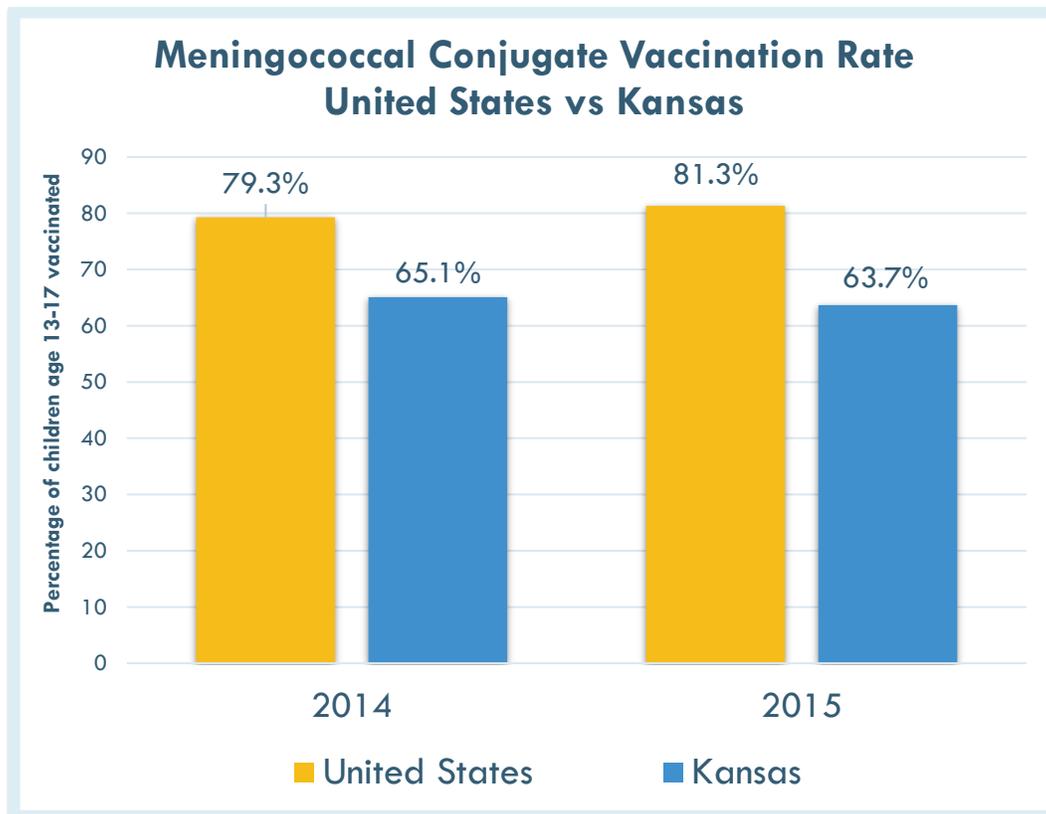
A Health Provider Call to Change

What is Meningococcal Disease?

Meningococcal disease is an umbrella term for any illness caused by the bacteria *Neisseria meningitides* (also known as meningococcus). Meningococcal disease is severe and can cause infections in the blood stream (bacteremia) or infections of the lining of the brain and spinal cord (meningitis). This disease acts rapidly and can kill people within 24 hours from the onset of symptoms. The early symptoms of meningococcal disease are very similar to the flu, such as a fever, headache, and a stiff neck. More serious symptoms include sensitivity to light, vomiting, rash, confusion and loss of consciousness.

Facts about Meningococcal Disease:

- About 1 in 10 cases is fatal
- About 2 out of the 9 people who survive will have permanent disabilities. Disabilities could be a loss of an arm or leg, a brain injury, or a hearing loss.
- A person can get the disease by kissing, drinking after someone, coughing, or sneezing.



*Includes percentages receiving meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MenACWY) and meningococcal-unknown type vaccine

This graph shows the percentage of children ages 13-17 who have received at least one dose of the meningococcal conjugate vaccine in the United States compared to Kansas. Kansas falls below the national immunization average for the meningococcal conjugate vaccination. (Source: CDC, 2015 National Immunization Survey)

Andy's Story



Andy was in his senior year at the University of Kansas (KU). He was living in the scholarship halls when he became incredibly sick. Some friends rushed him to the KU Watkins Health Center and he was soon taken to Lawrence Memorial Hospital, where he was diagnosed with bacterial meningitis. He was airlifted to KU Hospital that night and spent the next 141 days there battling for his life against the bacteria that ultimately cost him parts of all four limbs. He wrote in a blog things that he would go back and tell himself before the disease. He says, "I want to warn him that when he wakes up from that coma, he will face suffering worse than any he has ever imagined for himself... I want to tell him that in losing that (comfortable life), he will gain a new purpose." Andy now advocates for meningococcal vaccines on college campuses. [Read more about Andy's miraculous story here.](#)

IKC Meningococcal Vaccine Goals:

One objective of the Immunize Kansas Coalition (IKC) is to increase immunization rates for quadrivalent meningococcal conjugate vaccine by 2020. Kansas is in the bottom 5 states for the quadrivalent meningococcal conjugate vaccine rates. Only about 64% of Kansans have received 1 or more of the quadrivalent meningococcal conjugate vaccination. Kansas is far below the Healthy People 2020 target of 80% of youth 13-15 being vaccinated. IKC's goal is to increase quadrivalent meningococcal conjugate vaccination rates among adolescents from 64% to 80% by 2020, congruent with the Healthy People 2020 goal.

IKC Goal
2020

IKC's goal is to increase quadrivalent meningococcal conjugate vaccine rates in Kansas youth ages 13 to 15 from 64% to 80% by 2020. This is a very aggressive goal that requires everyone's support and participation.

Provider Recommendations:

A strong recommendation from clinicians:

It is a routine vaccination. The first meningococcal vaccine is administered at 11 or 12 years old.

Vaccinate before you graduate! Emphasize that a 2nd dose is needed at age 16 to complete the series.

Some populations are at a higher risk than others; especially those planning to live in college dorms or going into the military should get vaccinated!

"After we get you in for your first vaccination, let's make sure we make you an appointment for your 2nd dose. You aren't fully covered with only one dose!"

Sample language