



## What is Meningococcal Disease?

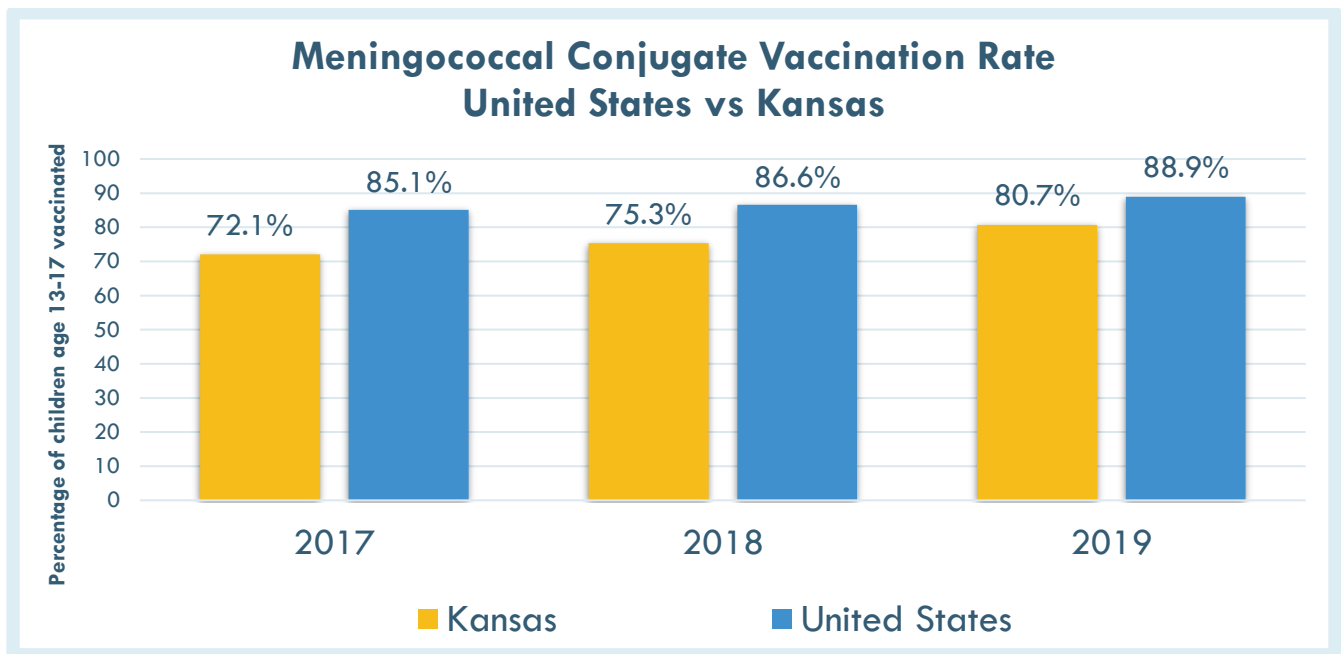
The term Meningococcal disease is used to describe any illness caused by the bacteria *Neisseria meningitides* (also known as meningococcus). Meningococcal disease is severe and can cause infections in the blood stream (bacteremia). It can also cause infections of the lining of the brain and spinal cord (meningitis). This disease acts fast and can kill people within 24 hours of the start of symptoms. The early symptoms of meningococcal disease are like the flu. There is a fever, headache, and a stiff neck. More serious symptoms include sensitivity to light, vomiting, rash, confusion and passing out.

## 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.

## Preventing Meningococcal Disease:

There are two types of meningococcal vaccines licensed in the United States: Meningococcal conjugate vaccines (MenACWY) and Serogroup B meningococcal vaccine (MenB). These vaccines help prevent the most common causes of meningococcal disease in the U.S.



\*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 meningococcal conjugate vaccination. (Source: CDC, 2019 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, caused by serogroup B. 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, what 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.

## IKC Meningococcal Vaccine Goals:

One objective of the Immunize Kansas Coalition (IKC) is to increase and maintain immunization rates for quadrivalent meningococcal conjugate vaccine through 2021. Kansas is in the bottom 10 states for this vaccination rate, with only 80.7% of Kansas teens receiving at least one dose. This places Kansas below the 88.9% national average and barely above the 80% Healthy People 2020 goal. IKC's current goal is to maintain quadrivalent meningococcal conjugate vaccination rates among adolescents at or above 80% through 2021.

IKC Goal  
**2021**

IKC's goal is to maintain quadrivalent meningococcal conjugate vaccine rates in Kansas youth ages 13 to 17 at or above 80% through 2021. This critical goal requires everyone's support and participation.

## KNOW the FACTS about meningococcal disease and TAKE ACTION:

Meningococcal disease can occur fast. And it can potentially cause lifelong disabilities. Talk with your health care provider to make sure that your teen is protected.

The first meningococcal conjugate vaccination is administered at 11 to 12 years old. A second dose is then needed at the age of 16 to complete the series. Talk with your teen's doctor if you are interested in MenB vaccination.

Talk to those you love about the meningococcal vaccine. Encourage them to schedule an appointment with their health care provider to get vaccinated.

Always check with your health care provider, during any visit, about what other vaccines your teen needs.