



What is Meningococcal Disease?

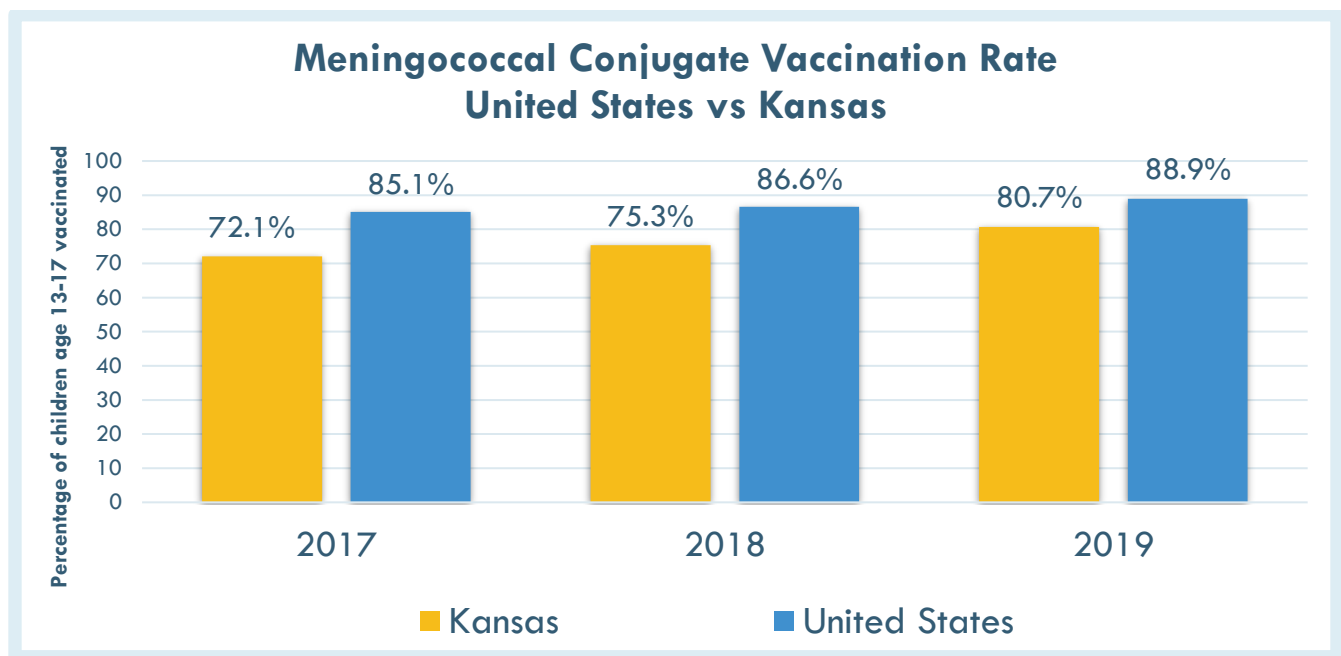
Meningococcal disease is an umbrella term for any illness caused by the bacteria *Neisseria meningitides* (also known as meningococcus). Meningococcal disease is severe and can cause infections in the blood stream (bacteremia) or infections of the lining of the brain and spinal cord (meningitis). This 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.

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.

Provider Recommendations:

A strong recommendation for MenACWY from clinicians:

It is a routine vaccination for all preteens and teens. The first vaccine is administered at 11 or 12 years old.

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

If a parent has concerns about the vaccine, listen respectfully, clarify their concern, then discuss the vaccine in a nonjudgmental way, seeking to address the parent's concerns.

Talk with parents about the MenB vaccination for their teen.

Any teen may get the MenB vaccine; certain preteens and teens should get it if they have certain immune disorders, a damaged spleen, or are at risk because of an outbreak.

"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