

## Vaccine

There are two meningococcal vaccines available in the U.S.:

- Meningococcal polysaccharide vaccine (MPSV4)
- Meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV4)

MCV4 is the preferred vaccine for people ages 2 through 55, but MPSV4 can be used when MCV4 is not available.

## Who Needs to be Vaccinated?

### Does my infant need this vaccine?

The meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV4) is recommended for certain high risk children from ages 2 through 10. Based on new data, and on the vaccine's recent approval by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices voted on October 23rd to recommend use of the MCV4 vaccine instead of the MPSV4 vaccine. The high risk children for whom this vaccine is recommended include children who travel to, and United States citizens who reside in, countries where meningitis is hyperendemic or epidemic, persons with terminal complement deficiency (an immune system disorder), and persons with a damaged spleen or whose spleen has been removed.

For additional details, consult the [Meningococcal Vaccine Information Statement](#) (2 pages) ([text-only](#)) and the [Childhood Immunization Schedule](#).

### Does my pre-teen or adolescent need it?

Meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV4) is routinely recommended for all 11 through 18 year olds. If your child did not get this vaccine at their 11 or 12 year old check-up, make an appointment for him or her to get it now.

For additional details, consult the [Meningococcal Vaccine Information Statement](#) (2 pages) ([text-only](#)) and the [adolescent immunization schedule](#).

### As an adult, do I need it?

See also: [adult immunization schedule](#)

You should get either the MPSV4 vaccine or the MCV4 vaccine if:

- You are a college freshmen living in a dormitory
- You are a military recruit
- You have a damaged spleen or your spleen has been removed
- You have terminal complement deficiency
- You are a microbiologist who is routinely exposed to *Neisseria meningitidis* (the causal pathogen)
- You are traveling or residing in countries in which the disease is common.