Health & Counseling Services

Meningitis B (MenB) Vaccine:
Frequently Asked Questions

Over this last academic year, we were saddened to see multiple outbreaks of meningitis at colleges and universities across the United States. In response to this outbreak, vaccine manufacturers have been able to produce a new meningitis vaccine (referred to as MenB). This vaccine covers Group B, a type of bacterial meningitis not previously covered by the meningococcal vaccines. Please read below for more information.

Why is the vaccine important for college students?
College students are at a higher risk for meningitis. This is due in part to the fact that many students live together in the residence halls and are living in close proximity to one another. Other behaviors like sharing drinks, utensils, coughing, or kissing can spread result in the spread of this infection.

How is this different than the meningococcal vaccine?
While we have had the Meningococcal vaccine for many years, that vaccine only covers for the A, C, Y, & W strains of meningitis. The strain we typically see causing outbreaks on college campuses is the B strain. The MenB vaccines cover for this strain. We recommend students have both vaccines in order to most effectively prevent contracting this potentially deadly disease.

Should my student get this vaccine?
The national committee that oversees vaccine recommendations is recommending that providers consider MenB vaccination for all individuals between the ages of 16 and 23, particularly if they will be in high risk environments. Because of the close proximity of living quarters and the behaviors mentioned above, colleges and universities are considered higher risk environments.

How many doses are required?
There are two brands of MenB vaccine. Both Bexsero and Trumenba are 2-dose series. Bexsero is given at today and then 1 month later. Trumenba is given today and then 6 months later. Please note that these vaccines cannot be interchanged. It is very important that you get two doses of the same brand.

Does Gonzaga carry this vaccine?
Gonzaga Health & Counseling Services has both Bexsero and Trumenba vaccines on hand, so we can assist with all of your MenB needs.

How much does it cost at Gonzaga?
Trumenba costs $125 at Health & Counseling Services while Bexsero costs $165. We do not process insurance, so students must pay cash, credit, or put the charge on their student account at time of service. We will provide a fee slip to submit to your insurance company if you would like to try to get reimbursed.

Where can my student get vaccinated?
Gonzaga Health & Counseling Services will carry this vaccine. In addition, local pharmacies such as Safeway Pharmacy and Bates Pharmacy have doses of these vaccines available. We recommend calling ahead if you are going to get this at a local pharmacy. These pharmacies may or may not be able to process your insurance directly for these vaccines. You will need to reach out to them for confirmation on cost and insurance processing.

Do you still have questions? Please contact our nurses’ line at 509-313-4066.  

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