



**SAN DIEGO STATE
UNIVERSITY**

News Release

San Diego State University Health Promotion
San Diego State University Student Health Services

To: SDSU Students

Date: July 5, 2016

Outbreak of Meningococcal Disease in Southern California

Since the beginning of May 2016, nine invasive meningococcal disease cases have been identified in men living in Los Angeles and Orange Counties, most of whom were men who had sex with men (MSM). Meningococcal disease is a serious bacterial infection that can result in an inflammation of the thin tissue that surrounds the brain and spinal cord called the meninges (meningitis) or a bloodstream infection (sepsis). There are at least 12 types of *N. meningitidis*, called "serogroups." Serogroups A, B, C, W, and Y cause most meningococcal disease. The onset of symptoms of meningitis typically develop within 3 to 7 days upon exposure and include a fever, severe headache, stiff neck, joint and muscle pain, a rash, sensitivity to light, or altered mental status. If you experience these symptoms, please seek medical attention immediately.

Although rare, meningococcal disease is serious and potentially fatal. One patient died as a result of the infection. Although no case of meningococcal disease has been currently identified in the San Diego area, there is still a potential risk of exposure. It is important to be aware of potential risks and preventative measures that you can take to reduce your risk.

Who may be at risk?

MSM who are HIV-infected are at increased risk of invasive meningitis disease. Other MSM may also be at increased risk, including those who:

- Regularly have close or intimate contact with multiple partners, or who seek partners through the use of online websites or phone digital applications.
- Regularly visit crowded venues such as bars, parties, etc.
- Smoke cigarettes, marijuana or illegal drugs, or spend time in smoky settings.

If you fall into a high-risk group, you can reduce your risk:

- **Get vaccinated against meningococcal disease.** All cases identified so far have been caused by serogroup C of the meningococcal bacteria. Meningococcal ACWY vaccines can help prevent meningococcal disease caused by this serogroup.. Vaccines are typically covered by most insurance plans, but if you are underinsured or uninsured, you can still get this meningitis vaccine for little or no fee. The SDSU Student Health Center has the vaccine available. Two doses are recommended if you are HIV positive and one dose for others at increased risk. A booster is needed if you received the vaccine more than five years ago. San Diego Pride events are scheduled for July 15-17, 2016, and individuals who have not been immunized and may be increased at risk should consider getting vaccinated at least two weeks before attending local Pride activities for better protection.
- **Avoid sharing drinks, cigarettes or other smoking equipment.**
- **Avoid contact with saliva or other fluids from the mouth or nose of other persons.**
- Condoms protect against sexually transmitted infections, but will not reduce the risk of invasive meningococcal disease.

Get Vaccinated

Student Health Services:

Current SDSU Students (the summer health fee will be waived to receive the meningitis vaccine for students who attended Spring classes and will be enrolling in the Fall semester)
Pricing: \$124 per dose (No insurance accepted)

Central Region Public Health Center:

For children and adults who do not have health insurance.
5202 University Avenue, San Diego, Ca 92105
Pricing: \$10 for the clinic visit, regardless of how many shots are given. (Anyone who cannot afford the fee can sign a fee waiver.)

References

CAHAN San Diego; County of San Diego, Health & Human Services Agency. (June 24, 2016). *Invasive Meningococcal Disease in Southern California*. Retrieved from file:///C:/Users/khamilton/Downloads/06-24-2016%20(2).pdf

California department of Public Health. (June 24, 2016). *CDPH Issues Health Advisory for Meningococcal Disease*. Retrieved from file:///C:/Users/khamilton/Downloads/PH16-037%20CDPH%20Meningococcal%20Advisory%20in%20Southern%20California%20News%20Release...%20(2).pdf

Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (March 31, 2016). Meningococcal ACWY Vaccines (MenACWY and MPSV4) VIS. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/vis-statements/mening.html>