



IONA COLLEGE • 715 NORTH AVENUE • NEW ROCHELLE, NY 10801-1890
PHONE: (914) 633-2548 • FAX: (914) 712-4102

Meningitis

On July 22, 2003, Gov. Pataki signed NY State Public Health Law (NYSPHL) §2167 requiring institutions, including colleges and universities, to distribute information about meningococcal disease and vaccination to all students meeting the enrollment criteria, whether they live on or off campus. This law became effective on August 15, 2003.

Iona College is required to maintain a record of the following for each student:

- A response to receipt of meningococcal disease and vaccine information signed by the student or student's parent or guardian. This must include information on the availability and cost of meningococcal meningitis vaccine (Menactra™); AND EITHER;
- A record of meningococcal meningitis immunization within the past 10 years: OR
- An acknowledgement of meningococcal disease risks and refusal of meningococcal meningitis immunization signed by the student or student's parent or guardian.

Meningitis disease strikes about 3,000 Americans each year and claims about 300 lives. Between 100 and 125 meningitis cases occur on college campuses and as many as 15 students will die from the disease.

A vaccine is available that protects against four types of the bacteria that cause meningitis in the United States – types A,C,Y and W-135. These types account for nearly two-thirds of meningitis cases among college students.

The Iona College Health Service Office does offer Menactra™ vaccine for students and there is a vaccination fee. Arrangements can be made to obtain this vaccination by calling Health Services at 914-633-2548.

The attached acknowledgement form must be completed and returned to Health Services in order to continue taking classes at Iona College.

To learn more about meningitis and the vaccine, please feel free to contact our office and/or consult with your child's physician. You can also find information about the disease at the NY State Department of Health Website www.health.state.ny.us or at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention website www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo.

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Bureau of Communicable Disease Control

Meningococcal Disease

Information for College Students and Parents of Children at Residential Schools and Overnight Camps

What is meningococcal disease?

Meningococcal disease is a severe bacterial infection of the bloodstream or meninges (a thin lining covering the brain and spinal cord).

Who gets meningococcal disease?

Anyone can get meningococcal disease, but it is more common in infants and children. For some college students, such as freshman living in dormitories, there is an increased risk of meningococcal disease. Between 100 and 125 cases of meningococcal disease occur on college campuses every year in the United States; between 5 and 15 college students die each year as a result of infection. Currently, no data are available regarding whether children can be in settings similar to college freshman living in dormitories. Other persons at increased risk include household contacts of a person known to have had this disease, and people traveling to parts of the world where meningitis is prevalent.

How is the germ meningococcus spread?

The meningococcus germ is spread by direct close contact with nose or throat discharges of an infected person. Many people carry this particular germ in their nose without any signs of illness, while others may develop serious symptoms.

What are the symptoms?

High fever, headache, vomiting, stiff neck, and a rash are symptoms of meningococcal disease. Among people who develop meningococcal disease, 10-15% die, in spite of treatment with antibiotics. Of those who live, permanent brain damage, hearing loss, kidney failure, loss of arms or legs, or chronic nervous system problems can occur.

How soon do the symptoms appear?

The symptoms may appear two to ten days after exposure, but usually within five days.

What is the treatment for meningococcal disease?

Antibiotics, such as penicillin G or ceftriaxone, can be used to treat people with meningococcal disease.

Is there a vaccine to prevent meningococcal meningitis?

Yes, a safe and effective vaccine is available. The vaccine is 85% to 100% effective in preventing four kinds of bacteria (serogroups A, C, Y, W-135) that cause about 70% of the disease in the United States. The vaccine is safe, with mild and infrequent side effects, such as redness and pain at the injection site lasting up to two days. After vaccination, immunity develops within seven to ten days and remains effective for approximately three to five years. As with any vaccine, vaccination against meningitis may not protect 100% of all susceptible individuals.

How do I get more information about meningococcal disease and vaccination?

Contact your family physician or your student health service. Additional information is also available on the websites of the New York State Department of Health, www.health.state.ny.us; the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention www.cdc.gov/ncid/dbmd/diseaseinfo; and the American College Health Association, www.acha.org.



HEALTH SERVICES

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MENINGOCOCCAL MENINGITIS VACCINATION
RESPONSE FORM

New York Public Health Law requires that all of the college and university students
enrolled for at least six (6) semester hours or the equivalent per semester, or at least four
(4) semester hours per quarter, complete and return the following form to Iona College of
Health Services.

* Please note that the meningitis vaccine is required for ALL RESIDENT STUDENTS.

Check one box and sign below.

[] Had the meningococcal immunization (Menomune/Menactra) within the past 10
years.

Date received: _____ Provider signature _____

[] Read, or have had explained to me, the information regarding meningococcal
meningitis disease. I understand the risks of not receiving the vaccine. I have decided
that I (my child) will not obtain immunization against meningococcal meningitis
disease.

Signed _____ Date _____

Print Student's name _____ Student
Date of Birth _____

Student
Email address _____ Student ID# _____

Student
Mailing Address _____

Student
Phone Number () _____