**Meningitis/Hepatitis on Campus Know Your Risk**

**CDC Recommendations & Information for Meningococcal Disease and Hepatitis B**

The CDC recommends college students be educated about the benefits of vaccination against meningitis (a potentially fatal bacterial infection) and hepatitis B. The recommendation is based on studies showing that college students, particularly freshmen in residence halls, are at a modestly increased risk for meningococcal disease compared with other persons of the same age and have an increased risk of hepatitis B. The American College Health Association (ACHA) recognize immunizations offer safe and effective protection from vaccine-preventable diseases and outbreaks. Therefore, with the re-emergence of diseases, in part due to factors such as un-immunized and under-immunized persons and global travel, the ACHA strongly supports the use of vaccines to protect the health of our individual students and our campus community.

Additionally, the State of South Carolina law requires higher education institutions to inform students and parents about the risk of contracting these diseases and the availability of preventive vaccines. Therefore, South Carolina State University encourages all students, parents, and guardians to learn more about these serious communicable diseases and to make informed decisions regarding protection. Vaccines are an important step forward for controlling preventable diseases, especially in outbreak settings on university campuses.

South Carolina State University requires the meningococcal conjugate vaccine (Menactra, Menveo, Bexsero, Trumenba) after the 16th birthday for all entering students age 21 or younger. If the initial dose was given before the 16th birthday, a booster is required. Entering students must present proof of meningococcal conjugate vaccination or may sign a waiver declining the meningitis vaccination. All other college students who wish to reduce their risk of infection may choose to be vaccinated.

**Meningococcal disease** is a serious illness caused by a type of bacteria called *Neisseria meningitidis*. It can lead to meningitis (infection of the lining of the brain and spinal cord) and infections of the blood. Meningococcal disease often occurs without warning – even among people who are otherwise healthy. When meningitis strikes, its flu-like symptoms make it difficult to diagnose.

Meningococcal disease can spread from person to person through close contact (coughing or kissing) or lengthy contact, especially among people living in highly populated conditions (residence hall). According to the CDC, even when it is treated, meningitis kills 10 to 15 infected people out of 100. Of those who survive, about 10 to 20 out of every 100 will suffer disabilities to include hearing loss, brain damage, kidney damage, amputations, and nervous system problems.

* **Bacterial Meningitis Vaccine (serogroup ACWY) Menactra, Menveo, Menomune**

\South Carolina State University requires all incoming students under 21 years of age to be immunized (quadrivalent meningococcal conjugate vaccine) against meningococcal disease (serogroups ACWY). A signed declination is required from students (or parents whose student is under the age of 18) who choose not to be immunized.

* **Bacterial Meningitis Vaccine (serogroup B) Bexsero or Trumenba**

Outbreaks of serogroup B meningococcal disease have been reported from college campuses during the last several years and resulted in deaths and severe disabilities http://www.nmaus.org/disease-prevention-information/serogroup-b-meningococcal-disease/outbreaks. The quadrivalent meningococcal conjugate vaccine that is required for all students under the age of 21 does not include protection against serogroup B meningococcal disease. The CDC recommends the use of serogroup B meningococcal vaccines for people identified to be at increased risk.

**Hepatitis B virus (HBV)** is a viral infection that attacks the liver and can cause both acute and chronic disease. HBV is a blood-borne disease commonly spread by contact with infected blood, needles or by having sex with an infected person. While all students should practice personal behaviors that reduce exposure, the best protection against HBV is immunization. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the best way to prevent Hepatitis B is by getting vaccinated. For adults, the Hepatitis B vaccine is given as a series of three shots over a period of six months. The entire series is needed for long-term protection. Most people in the US acquire HBV disease as adolescents and adults. College students should seriously consider immunization.

* **Hepatitis B Vaccine**

The vaccination schedule most often used for adults is three intramuscular injections, the second and third doses administered one and six months, respectively, after the first dose.

**For more detailed information**: Please visit the websites for Centers for Disease Control (http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/mening/who-vaccinate.htm) or the American College Health Association ([www.acha.org](http://www.acha.org)), visit Brooks Health Center.

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|  | Declined Meningococcal Vaccination | | | **E-Sign**: | Click or tap here to enter text. | **Date:** | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Print Name:** | | Click or tap here to enter text. | | | | **Date:** | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Parent/Legal Guardian E-Sign:** | | | Click or tap here to enter text. | | | **Date:** | Click or tap here to enter text. |

Parent/Legal guardian signature required if student is under the age of 18)

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