



## Meningococcal - Pregnancy



### What is meningitis?

Meningitis is an infection of the lining around the brain and spinal cord. Meningitis can be caused by viruses, bacteria, fungus, or parasites. The seriousness of the illness and treatment differs depending on the type of meningitis.

Bacterial meningitis is usually a very severe condition but there are vaccines to help prevent many kinds of bacterial meningitis.

### Is bacterial meningitis contagious?

Yes! While bacterial meningitis is not as contagious as a cold or the flu, it can be passed on through contact with a sick person's saliva or spit.

For example, it can be passed from person to person through coughing or kissing. Individuals living close together, like students in a college dorm, are at increased risk for getting bacterial meningitis.

### I just got the meningococcal vaccine. How long should I wait until I get pregnant?

Since the meningococcal vaccine is non-infectious, there is no recommended waiting period before attempting to get pregnant.

### I didn't know I was pregnant when I got the meningococcal vaccine. Is there a risk to my baby?

Non-infectious vaccines in general are considered to be a low risk during pregnancy. Specific to the meningococcal vaccines, six studies that included 335 women who received the older MPSV type vaccines during pregnancy found no related harmful effects. Most of these women were vaccinated after the first trimester.

Voluntary reports to a vaccine database also found no unusual pattern of outcomes in 103 reports about pregnancies with the Menactra type MCV4 vaccine exposure. This vaccine had been most often given in the first trimester in these reports. Additional studies are being done to confirm the initial reassuring information.

### There is an outbreak of meningococcal disease in my area – should I get the vaccine even though I am pregnant?

Meningococcal disease is a very serious condition. If you are at risk to get the disease, it is recommended that you get the vaccine, regardless of whether or not you are pregnant.

### Can I receive the meningococcal vaccine while breastfeeding?

Yes! Non-infectious vaccines like the meningococcal vaccine are compatible with breastfeeding. Be sure to talk to your health care provider about all your choices for breastfeeding.