



UK Health  
Security  
Agency

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Re. Meningitis  
Ref 201202036

15 May 2026

Dear staff, parents, carers, student or young person

**If you are under 18 please show this letter to your parent / carer and discuss this with them.**

This letter applies to:

- Anyone who lives in Weymouth or Portland or Chickerell and is in current school years 7 to 13 (or equivalent), or anyone not in full time education who would be in one of these year groups

OR

- Anyone who attends an educational setting in the Weymouth, Portland or Chickerell area and is in current school years 7 to 13 (or equivalent).

As you are probably aware, in March and April of this year, there were three young people who had meningitis B (MenB) infection. In response to these cases, all young people of secondary school age in the area were offered antibiotics and vaccination on a precautionary basis. We have not seen any further cases with this strain of MenB.

The vaccination for MenB requires two doses to protect an individual from infection. Most people have now received the first dose. If you are in the eligible group (see above) but have not yet received your first dose, please take this letter to your GP, who should be able to provide you with this vaccine.

**We are now offering a second dose. It is really important that you have this second dose. Otherwise, you will not be protected against the infection.**

**How can I get my second dose of MenB vaccine?**

There will be clinics administering the second dose of the vaccine at the following places and times for your child's school or group:

Date	Time	Location
Friday 5 June	16:00-19:30	All Saints Academy
Saturday 13 June	09:00-17:00	Budmouth Academy

## Information about the Vaccine

### What is the vaccination I will receive?

The name of the vaccine is Bexsero. Bexsero is a vaccine that helps protect against most strains of *Neisseria meningitidis* group B (MenB) bacteria. These bacteria can cause meningitis (an infection of the lining of the brain and spinal cord) and septicaemia (blood poisoning). It has been used in the UK routine immunisation programme for babies since 2015 and has led to 75% reduction in MenB disease in vaccinated groups.

You need **two doses** of the vaccine for protection. The second dose must be given at least four weeks after the first dose but can be given later. The vaccine is given by injection usually in the upper arm.

### Does the vaccine have any side-effects?

It is common to get some swelling, redness or tenderness where you have the injection. You may also get a mild fever, nausea, headache or muscle aches but these symptoms should disappear after 1 or 2 days.

More serious side effects are rare. You can take over the counter pain medication such as paracetamol to manage these symptoms if needed.

Any side effects are usually very mild, but the vaccine may make you feel a bit unwell for a short time, **but it's really important you completed the two doses** as one dose alone is not effective

### How long will it take for the vaccine to protect me?

It takes at least 2 weeks from your second dose of vaccine for your body to produce antibodies to give you a good level of protection.

### I've already had the Men ACWY vaccine, do I still need this?

Yes. The MenACWY vaccine does not protect against MenB, which is the strain involved in this outbreak.

### Am I at risk?

The risk of getting the disease is very low. The bacteria that cause the disease are very common: at any time about 1 in 10 of us has them in our noses and throats without ever knowing they are there, and for most of us this is harmless. We pass the bacteria between each other by close contact (e.g. coughing, sneezing, etc.).

Usually, we have to be in very close or regular contact with someone for the bacteria to pass between us. Even when this happens, most of us will not become ill because we have natural immunity. The bacteria do not naturally live or survive for long outside the human body.

## Signs and symptoms of meningococcal disease

It's important everyone is alert to the signs and symptoms of meningococcal meningitis and septicaemia. Get medical help immediately if you or someone you know experiences these symptoms - call NHS 111 for urgent advice, or 999 in a medical emergency.

- a rash that doesn't fade when pressed with a glass
- sudden onset of high fever
- severe and worsening headache
- stiff neck
- vomiting and diarrhoea
- joint and muscle pain
- dislike of bright lights
- very cold hands and feet
- seizures
- confusion/delirium
- extreme sleepiness/difficulty waking.

Anyone who becomes unwell with symptoms of meningitis and septicaemia should seek medical help urgently at the closest Accident and Emergency Department or by dialling 999. If you're not sure if your symptoms are serious, use [NHS 111 online](#) or call 111 to find out what to do.

### **Routine prevention**

It is important that everyone is **up to date with routine vaccinations**, including the MenACWY vaccine, where applicable. The MenACWY is a different vaccine to the vaccine for MenB. The full UK routine schedule is available here: [Complete routine immunisation schedule from 1 January 2026 - GOV.UK](#)

### **Further Information**

If you would like further advice or support, both the Meningitis Research Foundation and Meningitis Now are available:

- The Meningitis Research Foundation, [www.meningitis.org](http://www.meningitis.org) telephone: 0808 800 3344
- Meningitis Now, [www.meningitisnow.org](http://www.meningitisnow.org) telephone: 0808 80 10 388 helpline email address: [helpline@meningitisnow.org](mailto:helpline@meningitisnow.org)

You can find out more about meningitis here:

- <https://ukhsa.blog.gov.uk/2025/10/31/what-is-meningitis-symptoms-risks-and-how-to-protect-yourself/>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities/information-for-education-settings-in-england-regarding-the-meningococcal-disease-outbreak>

Thank you for your support.

Yours faithfully

Dr Fiona Neely

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