

## **News Release**

### **For Immediate Release**

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### **Do Your Students Have Their Meningitis Shots?**

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department encourages all youth aged 16 to 23 to get their Meningitis B (MenB) vaccination. Meningitis is a life-threatening illness that is caused by bacteria that infect the blood, brain, or spinal cord. It is easily spread in crowded settings such as college dormitories, locker rooms, or kissing an infected person. You can catch meningitis from a person who looks healthy. There are two types of Meningococcal vaccine that protect against several strains of this disease: Meningitis ACWY and Meningitis B.

“If your child hasn’t gotten their MenACWY and MenB shots previously, ask their doctor or nurse about getting these shots now,” states Melissa Propp, RN, Public Health Nurse.

“Meningococcal disease is rare but does occur in the United States, most frequently in college settings.”

Symptoms of meningitis most commonly are fever, headache, and stiff neck, similar to flu-like symptoms. Some people may also have nausea, vomiting, confusion, or sensitivity to light.

Many colleges require a record of meningitis shots having been given prior to the start of classes. If you are traveling internationally to certain areas of the world, such as countries in Africa in the region known as the Meningitis Belt, you may also need these vaccines.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) all 11 to 12-year-olds should be vaccinated with a Meningitis ACWY vaccine. A booster dose is recommended at age 16 years. Teens and young adults (16 through 23) should be vaccinated with a Meningitis B vaccine (meningococcal serogroup B). In certain situations, other children and adults may be recommended to get meningococcal vaccines.

Call your local health care provider today to get your child vaccinated for meningitis. If you have questions about meningitis shots or other immunizations, call Melissa Propp, RN Public Health Nurse, at (308) 345-4223.

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins and Red Willow counties. You can follow us on Facebook and Twitter or view the website at [www.swhealth.ne.gov](http://www.swhealth.ne.gov). Call (308) 345-4223 or stop by the office at 404 West 10<sup>th</sup> Street in McCook.

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