Information for Consumers on Meningococcal ACWY Vaccination

Meningococcal disease
Invasive meningococcal disease is a rare but serious condition that is caused by the bacterium Neisseria meningitidis. There are 13 known serotypes of which the A, B, C, W and Y serotypes most often cause disease.

Immunisation
Immunisation uses the body’s natural defense mechanism to build resistance to infection. The ‘MenACWY’ vaccine offers protection against four meningococcal subtypes (A,C, W and Y) in a single combined injection.

Safety of the vaccine
The meningococcal ACWY vaccine is safe, effective and has few side effects. The vaccine meets Australia’s Therapeutic Goods Administration requirements.

Adverse effects of the vaccine
The vaccine is generally well tolerated. Some people may experience mild adverse effects including injection site pain, redness and swelling, muscle aches, headache, nausea, loss of appetite and fever.

Other more serious adverse effects
Some people experience fainting. If this has been a problem in the past, please inform your pharmacist. Very few people have had an anaphylactic reaction after vaccination. Severe adverse reactions are rare but may occur after any vaccine.

People who should have the MenACWY vaccine
The meningococcal ACWY vaccine is recommended for any person older than 6 weeks old who wants to protect themselves against meningococcal disease. The following groups have an additional risk:
- Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander people aged two months to 19 years
- Adolescents aged 15-19 years
- Adolescents and young adults who are current smokers or living in close quarters
- Travellers to areas where meningococcal disease is more common (such as parts of Africa) or to mass gatherings (such as the Hajj)
- People with medical conditions that increase their risk of invasive meningococcal disease

People who should not have the MenACWY vaccine
People who have experienced anaphylaxis after a previous dose of any meningococcal ACWY vaccine.

After care
It is recommended that you remain in the pharmacy for 15 minutes after your vaccination to ensure safety.

Can I receive a free vaccine under the National Immunisation Program?
People aged 15-19 may be able to get the vaccine at no cost from their GP.

Questions
If you have any questions, please ask your pharmacist.

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia

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