

MENINGITIS VACCINATION

Lebanon Valley College requires meningitis vaccination for all incoming new resident students. The vaccine, Menactra, protects students against many serotypes of the bacteria which accounts for at least 70% of vaccine-preventable cases in college-aged students. For students who receive the first dose at age 13 through 15 years, a one-time booster dose should be administered, preferably at age 16 through 18 years, before the peak in increased risk. Many insurance companies are now reimbursing for the vaccine. You will need to contact your individual health insurance carrier to determine if this immunization is covered by your policy. If your insurance plan will pay for the vaccine, you should receive it at your family physician's office. If you choose to have your son/daughter receive the vaccine at the Lebanon Valley College, Shroyer Health Center, please take advantage of our **PreOrder/Pre-Pay Program**. The cost will be \$125. See attached form for details. **The Health Center will not bill your insurance.**

Neisseria Meningitidis or meningitis is a rare, but devastating, disease that is transmitted by droplets of respiratory secretions in the air from direct contact with an infected person/carrier. Direct contact is defined as oral contact with shared items such as cigarettes, drinking glasses, or intimate contact such as kissing. Meningitis is often difficult to diagnose because early symptoms of the disease mimic those of the flu. The seasonality of the disease also parallels that of influenza season. If not treated early, meningitis can lead to swelling of the membranes surrounding the brain and spinal column as well as severe and permanent disabilities, such as hearing loss, brain damage, seizures, limb amputation and even death. Certain college students, particularly freshmen who live in residence halls, have been found to have an increased risk for meningococcal meningitis.

The meningitis vaccine is a preparation of an inactivated bacteria group specific polysaccharide antigen. Potential side effects of the vaccine include: possible pain, redness, swelling at the injection site lasting one to two days, and possibly, fever. Clinical protection begins 7 to 10 days after receiving the vaccine. As with all vaccines, 100 % protection cannot be guaranteed to all recipients.

Questions regarding the vaccine can be directed to your family physician or on the web at www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), www.acha.org, American College Health Association, or call the Student Health Services at (717)867-6232.