

MENINGITIS OUTBREAK – IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Please note we are currently experiencing high volumes of calls and emails. We will get back to any queries as soon as possible.

What's happening?

- There is a **meningococcal disease outbreak** in Kent.
 - UKHSA is working to **contain the outbreak** and is giving **prophylaxis antibiotics** to close contacts.
 - **No new advice** has been issued about accessing the **MenB vaccine** for the wider public.
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Who decides vaccine recommendations?

- All vaccine recommendations in the UK are monitored and decided by the **Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI)**.
 - The JCVI reviews **all cases of vaccine-preventable disease**, national data, and emerging risks.
 - **Currently, there are no plans to offer MenB vaccine outside of the routine infant schedule.**
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What protection does my secondary-aged child already have?

- Children receive **Hib/MenC** at **1 year of age**, which provides early protection.
 - In **Year 9**, young people are offered the **MenACWY** vaccine.
 - MenACWY provides protection during the **later school years** and into **college/university**, where risk is higher.
 - This means most secondary-aged children **already have strong protection** against the meningococcal strains of greatest concern in teens and young adults.
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Check Your Child's Vaccine History

You can check your child's vaccination record by:

- Looking in your child's **Red Book**
- Asking your **GP surgery**
- Looking for emails from **Cinnamon Digital** (school e-consent system)
- If your child is **secondary school age**, you can contact the Immunisation Team:
 -  **West Berkshire:** westschoolimms@berkshire.nhs.uk
 -  **East Berkshire:** eastschoolimms@berkshire.nhs.uk

Routine Vaccines to Stay Protected

Make sure your child is up to date with:

- **MenACWY (Year 9)**
- **Td/IPV booster (Year 9)**

Full vaccine schedule:

 <https://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/nhs-vaccinations-and-when-to-have-them/>

Know the Symptoms of Meningitis

Seek urgent medical help if you notice:

- Rash that **doesn't fade** with pressure
- **High fever**
- **Severe headache**
- **Stiff neck**
- **Vomiting**
- **Cold hands or feet**
- **Confusion**

Reduce the Risk

- Wash hands regularly
 - Don't share **drinks, vapes, or cigarettes**
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