

Protecting your baby against meningitis and septicaemia

MenC vaccination programme

Information about changes

From 1st July 2016, the vaccination schedule for meningococcal C (MenC) is changing.

MenC disease

Although MenC is a serious illness caused by the C strains of meningococcal bacteria, the success of the MenC vaccination programme means that there are almost no cases of MenC disease in infants or young children in the UK.

Vaccine programmes are regularly monitored and adapted to ensure they give your baby the best protection, when they need it most.

The infant dose of MenC that is normally given to your baby at three months old will now be removed from the schedule. All children will continue to be offered a combined Hib/MenC vaccine when they reach one year of age. This, along with the adolescent MenACWY vaccination, will help to provide protection across all age groups including infants and children.



MenC vaccine has worked so well, that your baby will now get their first dose (with Hib) from their first birthday!

What do I need to do now to make sure my baby is protected against meningitis?

You don't need to do anything – the changes to the MenC programme will automatically take place on 1st July 2016.

What vaccines will my baby have to protect against meningitis?

Your baby should have their MenB vaccines at eight and sixteen weeks of age and they should have their Hib/MenC vaccine and another dose of MenB when they reach one year of age.

Be aware, be prepared

Meningitis (inflammation of the brain) and septicaemia (blood poisoning) can be caused by different infections so you need to make sure that you are aware of the signs and symptoms of these diseases.

Early warning signs

You should phone 999 immediately to request an ambulance if your child has a fever (high temperature) and any of the following symptoms:

- pain in the muscles, joints or limbs, such as in the hands or legs
- unusually cold hands and feet, or shivering
- pale or blotchy skin and blue lips refusing feeds, vomiting
- feeling drowsy and not responding to you, or being difficult to wake
- being floppy and having no energy, or being stiff with jerky movements
- being irritable when picked up
- a high-pitched moaning cry
- grunting
- rapid or unusual patterns of breathing
- confusion and or headache

- spots or a rash that does not fade under pressure
- convulsions/seizures
- a bulging fontanelle (the soft patch on the top of the baby's head)
- a stiff neck
- disliking bright lights

Symptoms can occur in any order and some may not appear at all.

If you are concerned about your baby at any time, then trust your instincts and speak to your GP or call 111.

Further information with a full description of the symptoms of meningitis is available on the NHS Choices website: www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Meningitis/Pages/Symptoms.aspx

You can also find more information advice and support at:

Meningitis Research Foundation

Free helpline 080 8800 3344

www.meningitis.org

Meningitis Now Helpline from

9am to midnight 0808 80 10 388

www.meningitisnow.org

NHS Choices

www.nhs.uk/vaccinations



Public Health
England