



**COUNTY OF ORANGE
HEALTH CARE AGENCY**

**PUBLIC HEALTH
EPIDEMIOLOGY & ASSESSMENT**

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Update on Outbreak of Meningococcal Disease in Men Who Have Sex With Men in Southern California

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) is reporting an increase of serogroup C invasive meningococcal disease (IMD) in Southern California, particularly in Los Angeles County, Orange County and the city of Long Beach. The majority of infections have occurred in men who have sex with men (MSM). IMD includes meningitis, bacteremia and sepsis caused by *Neisseria meningitidis* bacteria, which are transmitted from person-to-person through respiratory droplets, usually during close contact.

Situation Update:

- 24 cases of IMD have been identified in Southern California that are possibly or confirmed to be associated with this cluster since March 4, 2016.
- Approximately 75% of cases associated with this cluster have been in men who have sex with men (MSM). No direct social connection between these cases has been found.
- Seven cases have been identified in Orange County residents, including three in the last 14 days.
- Two Orange County residents died as a result of their infections.

Due to this ongoing risk, and in consultation with the CDPH and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Orange County Health Care Agency recommends that all MSM in Orange County receive quadrivalent meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV4).

MCV4 vaccines (Menveo® or Menactra®) protect against serogroup C disease as well as disease caused by serogroups A, W and Y. Because meningococcal vaccine induced immunity wanes, a booster dose can be considered for those whose last dose of MCV4 was ≥ 5 years ago. MSM who are HIV positive have been at particular risk in previous outbreaks of IMD in MSM. MSM who are not known to be HIV-infected and have not been tested in the past year should be offered HIV testing.

- **A single dose of MCV4 is adequate for non-HIV infected MSM**
- Providers should consider reaching out to their MSM patients to assure that they are offered vaccination.
- Although Menactra® and Menveo® are licensed for persons through 55 years of age, they may be administered to persons 56 years of age and older.
- **Per prior CDC recommendations, all HIV-infected persons (≥ 2 months of age) should receive two doses of MCV4 vaccine 8-12 weeks apart as their primary series.** Previously vaccinated HIV-infected persons who received only one dose of vaccine should receive a second dose at the earliest opportunity, regardless of the time interval since previous dose. A booster dose should be given every 5 years if the previous dose was administered at ≥ 7 years of age. MCV4 is included on the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) formulary.
 - For information on other groups who should receive meningococcal vaccination, see <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/acip-recs/vacc-specific/mening.html>.

MSM who practice specific behaviors may be at increased risk, and in particular should be encouraged to get vaccinated. Many, but not all, MSM cases identified in the current event practiced these behaviors:

- Regularly have close or intimate contact with multiple partners, or seek partners through the use of online websites or phone digital applications
- Regularly visit crowded venues such as bars, parties, etc.
- Smoke cigarettes or marijuana or use illegal drugs, or spend time in smoky settings.

All suspect, probable and confirmed meningococcal disease cases should be reported immediately to Orange County Health Care Agency Epidemiology at 714-834-8180. For more information, see <http://ochealthinfo.com/phs/about/dcepi/epi> or call 714-834-8180.