

Confirmed Meningitis Case Who Attended Boardmaster Festival in Newquay.

Public Health England (PHE) has been investigating a case of confirmed meningococcal disease (group B) in a teenager who attended St Brendan's Sixth Form College, Brislington, Bristol. The teenager was in attendance at 'Boardmaster Festival' in Newquay, Cornwall when they became unwell and was treated in hospital in Cornwall.

All close contacts of the case have been followed up and given antibiotics as a precaution. PHE are seeking to reassure parents and students that it is highly unlikely that this case is related to the two previous cases of meningococcal disease at St. Brendan's which occurred 14 months ago. The teenager had not attended the college since the end of the summer term.

This case has caused concern and anxiety across the school community and GP practices, the ambulance services and A&Es may receive additional calls.

PHE's priority at this time is that students protect themselves by getting vaccinated for groups ACW and Y. You will be aware that the Men ACWY vaccine for teenagers was introduced in 2015. Since then this has been offered to pupils in Year 9 in schools, with a catch up campaign being rolled out for older pupils (Years 10 – 13) and university 'freshers'. If students are in these age groups and are unsure if they have had the vaccine, we are encouraging them to contact their GP surgery. If a student is eligible for this vaccine and contacts you for advice please could you encourage them to apply for the vaccine as promptly as possible.

There is an on-going campaign to improve Men ACWY vaccination uptake for all eligible young people and your support with this wider campaign is also appreciated. We will shortly be sending GP practices uptake data which will enable them to assess the number of unvaccinated Year 13 students linked to specific surgeries and plan any further call recall required for them.

PHE are also reminding parents and students of the signs and symptoms of meningococcal disease as outlined below.

Meningitis

- Fever
- Vomiting
- Severe headache
- Stiff neck
- Dislike of bright light
- Joint/muscle pain

Septicaemia

- Fever
- Vomiting
- Bruising rash
- Rapid breathing
- Cold hands and feet

Please also be aware that in some cases individuals have displayed symptoms similar to those associated with gastroenteritis. If you require further health protection advice or information,

please contact PHE's Acute Response Centre on 0300 3038162 Option 1 Option 2 or for advice on any aspect of the MenACWY vaccination programme contact england.southwestscrimms@nhs.net

Question: If somebody comes to my practice wanting antibiotics as prophylaxis because they attended the festival, what should I say?

Answer: PHE have already made contact with all close contacts that require prophylaxis. Contacts are those people who have had *prolonged close contact* with the case in a *household type setting* during the seven days before onset of illness (in this case, 11th August). Examples of such contacts would be those living and/or sleeping in the same household (including extended household), pupils in the same dormitory, boy/girlfriends, or university students sharing a kitchen in a hall of residence.

Prophylaxis **is not** indicated for non-intimate kissing (cheek or mouth) or sharing drinks or other transient contact (unless the contact has been directly exposed to large particle droplets/secretions from the respiratory tract of a case around the time of admission to hospital).

If you see anybody who you think meets the criteria of a contact please let PHE know immediately.

Question: What if a patient wants to know why they aren't eligible for the Men B vaccine.

Answer: The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation continually reviews vaccination programmes, including MenB and considers changes based on current scientific evidence. In the UK, infants in the first year of life have the highest incidence of group B meningococcal (MenB) disease. For this reason, babies are given the MenB vaccine with the other routine vaccinations at 2 months, 4 months and 12 months of age. Vaccinating babies at these times helps protect them when they are most at risk of developing MenB disease. Cases of MenB disease decrease rapidly after the first two years of life, with only a small peak in early adulthood. Therefore, at this time, there is no routine immunisation programme for young people or adults.

Question: Do those who went to the Boardmaster event need a booster vaccination if they have had previous vaccines for meningococcal?

Answer: Being at the event does not mean they require a booster. However, you can use this as an opportunity to ensure that they are fully up to date with their vaccines and check that they have had the MenACWY vaccine if eligible.

Question: What else can I advise?

Answer: Please ensure that this young person has, if eligible, had the MenACWY vaccine. If not, get them booked in. Also use this as an opportunity to raise awareness of signs and symptoms of meningococcal infection.

Questions: Where can I direct people for more general information/support?

Answer: Further information is available from:

The Meningitis Research Foundation: www.meningitis.org, 0808 800 3344 (24hr)



or scan here if you have a Smart phone

Meningitis Now: <https://www.meningitisnow.org>, 0808 80 10 388 (9am-10pm)

If you have any questions please call the Health Protection Team on 0300 303 8162

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