

Health Unit Media Release



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FREE MENINGITIS-C VACCINE FOR COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

The Health Unit is encouraging students entering college or university this fall to receive the Meningitis C vaccine prior to starting the school semester.

Meningitis is a serious infection of the lining of the brain or spinal cord. The bacteria that can cause Meningitis live in the back of the nose and throat. **Bacteria from the saliva of an infected person can be spread through kissing or when common items are shared like drinks, water bottles, straws, cigarettes, toothbrushes or lip-gloss.**

The vaccine, which is between 92% and 97% effective, provides protection against the type of Meningitis that is called "Group C". This group of bacteria has been almost exclusively responsible for outbreaks in schools and communities. As many of these cases of Meningitis are in **adolescents and young adults**, post-secondary institutions are starting to recommend that students living in residence be vaccinated.

Students are encouraged to:

- ✓ Schedule an appointment with their Health Care Provider.
- ✓ Schedule an appointment with the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit:

Almonte 613-256-1203
Kemptville 613-258-5941
Gananoque 613-382-4231

Brockville 613-345-5685
Smiths Falls 613-283-2740
Perth 613-283-2740

If you have any questions regarding the Meningitis-C vaccine, please feel free to contact our Vaccine Preventable Disease Program at 613-345-5685 or 1-800-660-5853. For more information please visit www.healthunit.org.