

Health Unit Media Release



Contact: Jamie Ferguson RN, BScN, Public Health Nurse or
Joanne Desormeaux RN, BNSc, Public Health Nurse (345-5685 or 1-800-660-5853)

HEALTH UNIT OFFERING MENINGITIS-C VACCINE FOR HIGH-RISK GROUPS

The Health Unit will be offering Meningitis-C vaccine to all grade 7 students in the tri-county area. **Parents/guardians of grade 7 students will receive an information package with a consent form from their child's school.**

This campaign will start February 20, 2006.

Meningitis is a serious infection of the lining of the brain and/or spinal cord. The bacteria that 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 lipstick.**

The Meningococcal-C vaccine provides protection against the type of meningitis that is called "serogroup C". Serogroup C accounts for approximately 30% of cases of meningococcal disease in Canada.

Students who are unable to attend the school clinic can also receive the vaccine by:

- ✓ Scheduling an appointment with the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit.
- ✓ Making an appointment with their Health Care Provider.
- ✓ Going to a Walk-in clinic.

The Health Unit will also be offering Meningitis-C vaccine to all 15-19 year olds. This campaign will take place in all high schools throughout the tri-county area in May 2006.

The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care began publicly funding Meningococcal-C vaccine to all children aged 12 years (generally in grade 7) and youth aged 15-19 years in January 2005. One-year old children born on or after September 1, 2003 can also receive the Meningococcal-C vaccine through their health care provider or the Health Unit.

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.

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