

Meningitis Vaccination

Most parents know children should be vaccinated against meningitis before they go to college, where the crowded, sometimes the close quarters of dorm life makes it easier to spread meningitis bacteria and viruses through respiratory and throat secretions. Meningitis is usually caused by an infection that attacks the membranes covering the brain and spinal cord. The most serious types of meningitis can be life- threatening and can result in death.

Students living in university owned housing are asked when completing their housing application if they have received a vaccine to prevent meningitis after age 16. Many students complete the waiver acknowledging they are aware of the risks of meningitis and have chosen not to have the vaccine. This is very alarming in the event of a disease breakout. We encourage students and their families to learn if they have been properly vaccinated and to document this when applying for university housing and in the *Report of Medical History* form.

Please discuss vaccination to prevent meningitis with your medical provider or follow the link to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention for additional information to assist the student in making the best decision about vaccination.

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/mening/default.htm>