

# Information about meningococcal disease for 16-19-year-olds

Meningococcal disease is caused by meningococcal bacteria, which can cause life-threatening disease presenting as blood poisoning (septicaemia) and meningitis. One in ten who become ill will die, and around 30 per cent will have permanent disabilities.

It is common to carry the bacteria in the throat without becoming ill yourself, but you could still infect others.

## What are the symptoms?

The symptoms are not always easy to spot because they can resemble both a hangover and influenza. Small red dots may eventually appear on the skin that do not disappear when you press on them with a glass, and also neck stiffness.

### Consult a doctor if you have these symptoms:



Fever



Stiff neck



Headache



Tired



Vomiting and diarrhoea



Rash

## How can I protect myself?

A vaccine is the most effective measure to protect you against meningococcal disease.

If you are aged between 16-19 years you should take the vaccine, but both younger and older people can also take it.



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## Other ways to avoid infection:



Do not share bottles and glasses with others



Get enough sleep and rest



Avoid too much alcohol



Do not smoke or use snus



Avoid kissing many people

The disease develops quickly, and it's of the utmost importance to get to the hospital early if you are sick!

## Side effects from vaccination

Your arm may become red and tender at the injection site and may hurt for the first few days. You may also feel unwell or nauseous. This will pass quickly.

## What does it cost?

This depends on where you live.

Check with the health nurse at your school health service or your family doctor to find out how much the vaccine will cost.



You can read more about meningococcal disease and the vaccines on our website [www.fhi.no](http://www.fhi.no)