

Meningococcal B Vaccination for Aboriginal Children & At-Risk Individuals

Please distribute this information to all practice or clinic staff

- 1. Meningococcal B vaccine (Bexsero) is funded for all Aboriginal children under 2 years of age & individuals with specified risk conditions**
- 2. Vaccine distribution data indicate that eligible individuals may be missing out on meningococcal B vaccination**
- 3. Providers are strongly encouraged to identify eligible patients & opportunistically offer them meningococcal B vaccination**

Disease incidence

- The incidence of invasive meningococcal disease (IMD) caused by serogroup B is highest in young children compared with other age groups & about four times higher in Aboriginal children aged <2 years than in non-Aboriginal children.
- People with specified risk conditions (asplenia, hyposplenia, complement deficiency and those undergoing treatment with eculizumab*) are also at higher risk of getting IMD.

Vaccine eligibility

- Since 1 July 2020, meningococcal B vaccine (Bexsero) has been funded on the National Immunisation Program (NIP):
 - routinely for all Aboriginal children at 6 weeks, 4 months and 12 months of age
 - as a catch-up for Aboriginal children under 2 years of age who missed out on the vaccines (until June 2023)
 - routinely for people with specified risk conditions*
- Aboriginal children with certain risk conditions may require an additional dose of Bexsero \geq 6 months apart and are recommended to receive prophylactic paracetamol if they are receiving Bexsero.

Opportunistic vaccination

- Vaccine distribution data from the State Vaccine Centre (SVC) indicate that eligible individuals may be missing out on meningococcal B vaccination.
- Providers are strongly encouraged to review their patient lists and identify any unvaccinated Aboriginal children <2 years of age and individuals with specified risk conditions* & opportunistically offer them meningococcal B vaccination to protect them from IMD caused by serogroup B.

More information

- Schedule changes (1 July 2020) at www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/schedule-changes-faq.aspx
- Meningococcal vaccines factsheet at www.ncirs.org.au/sites/default/files/2019-04/Meningococcal_FactSheet_April2019_Final.pdf
- Australian Immunisation Handbook at <https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/vaccine-preventable-diseases/meningococcal-disease>
- Guide for healthcare providers at www.ncirs.org.au/meningococcal-b-vaccination-a-guide-for-healthcare-providers