



## “B” — A Newsmaker

Protecting yourself against meningococcal disease is especially important at college. In the U.S., college freshmen who live in dorms are three times more likely to get this disease than those age 18 to 23 years old in the general population. In fact, there have been serious outbreaks of meningitis B at several colleges in recent years.<sup>1-4</sup>

- **Two students became infected at Providence College in Rhode Island in 2015.**
- **Six students became infected at the University of Oregon in 2015, including one who died.**

Meningitis B was responsible for both of these outbreaks. There are vaccines available to help protect against meningitis B. And you can help by educating other teens about meningococcal disease, including meningitis B, and how they can get protected.

**Part 1:** Start by researching recent outbreaks of meningitis B on college campuses at the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases website ([www.nfid.org/idinfo/meningitis/meningococcal-b-college-outbreaks.html](http://www.nfid.org/idinfo/meningitis/meningococcal-b-college-outbreaks.html)) and on Google. Summarize what health officials have done to control such outbreaks.

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**Part 2:** Next, visit the “Videos” section at [www.ActionAgainstMeningitis.com](http://www.ActionAgainstMeningitis.com) to meet some young survivors of meningococcal disease. Summarize what you learn from their stories that you think all teens should know.

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**Part 3:** Now get the word out by creating a news article or blog or a classroom presentation that explains why teens and young adults are at a greater risk of getting meningococcal disease, especially at college, and how vaccination, including vaccination for meningitis B, can help protect them from this potentially deadly disease.

**References:** 1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Meningococcal disease. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website. <http://www.cdc.gov/meningococcal/index.html>. Updated April 1, 2014. Accessed April 2, 2015. 2. Bruce MG, Rosenstein NE, Capparella JM, et al. Risk factors for meningococcal disease in college students. *JAMA*. 2001;286(6):688-693. 3. Salit R. Providence College students asked to help evaluate meningitis vaccine. *The Providence Journal*. February 21, 2015. <http://www.providence-journal.com/article/20150221/NEWS/150229826/13972>. Accessed March 27, 2015. 4. Hill C. UO vaccination push reaches 8,000. *The Register-Guard*. April 2, 2015. <http://registerguard.com/rg/news/local/32843525-75/one-third-of-students-recommended-for-meningococcal-vaccine-took-it.html.csp>.

**Check with your doctor about getting vaccinated against meningitis B — the strain of meningococcal disease that pre-2014 vaccines in the U.S. could not help prevent.**