



LAC DPH Health Alert
Invasive Meningococcal Disease Update:
New Vaccine Recommendations for Men who Have Sex with Men (MSM)

April 2, 2014

This message is intended for all primary care, emergency medicine, internal medicine, HIV specialists and infectious disease providers. Please distribute as appropriate.

Key communication

- Four new cases of invasive meningococcal disease have occurred in men who have sex with men (MSM) since January 1, 2014
- LAC DPH is recommending meningococcal vaccine be offered to:
 - All HIV-positive MSM
 - All MSM, regardless of HIV status, who regularly have close or intimate contact with multiple partners or who seek partners through the use of digital applications (“apps”), particularly those who share cigarettes/marijuana or use illegal drugs.

Situation

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health is investigating a potential cluster of invasive meningococcal disease (IMD) among MSM. Since January 1, 2014 there have been a total of eight (8) IMD cases. Of these eight cases, four cases were reported among men who have sex with men, including three men who were HIV-positive. There have been three deaths, all occurring in MSM, two of whom were HIV-positive. In contrast to previous IMD investigations in 2012 and 2013, some commonalities were found among the 2014 MSM cases. Of the four IMD cases among MSM, three reported residence or socializing around the West Hollywood and North Hollywood areas, and three were between 27- 28 years of age (the fourth case was 50 years of age).

Based on consultation with IMD experts at the California Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), LAC DPH is recommending Meningococcal vaccine for both HIV-positive MSM (including men who may or may not identify as gay or bisexual) and HIV-negative MSM whose activities put them at higher risk.

Actions requested of providers

- ✓ Recommend meningitis vaccination to the following groups of MSM;
 - All HIV-positive MSM
 - All MSM, regardless of HIV status, who regularly have close or intimate contact with multiple partners or who seek partners through the use of digital applications (“apps”), particularly those who share cigarettes/marijuana or use illegal drugs.
- ✓ To increase vaccine uptake, Public Health requests that medical providers actively communicate with potentially at-risk patients about the need for meningococcal vaccination.
- ✓ Public Health encourages providers and health facilities that serve at-risk MSM to provide meningococcal vaccine to their patients. Patients may also go to <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/Mening.htm> for additional information regarding invasive meningococcal disease and vaccinations.

DPH will continue to monitor the epidemiology of IMD and update vaccine recommendations accordingly.

This Provider Health Alert was sent by Jeffrey D. Gunzenhauser, MD, MPH, Medical Director of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health.

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