

# Meningitis B

Two undergraduate students at Rutgers University-New Brunswick were diagnosed with invasive meningococcal disease, serogroup B, in March and April. Both students have since recovered and neither has any sequelae.

Meningococcal bacteria are spread from person to person through exchange of respiratory secretions during close or lengthy contact. The bacteria are commonly carried in the nasopharynx, and most persons do not have symptoms while carrying the bacteria. Patients with invasive meningococcal disease can deteriorate rapidly if untreated. Living in dormitory-style housing and having a high degree of social mixing are considered risk factors for developing meningococcal disease.

Vaccination is the best protection against meningococcal disease. However, the standard meningococcal vaccine required of Drew's residential students protects against serogroups of meningococcal bacteria A, C, W, and Y, but not against serogroup B. Persons not affiliated with the Rutgers University-New Brunswick campus are not recommended to receive the Meningitis B (Men B) vaccine specifically in response to this outbreak. However, unrelated to this outbreak, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) states that providers should vaccinate persons with high risk conditions and occupations.

(<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6422a3.htm>) and, per a Category B recommendation, may vaccinate any person aged 16–23 years with MenB vaccine (<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6441a3.htm>). At this time there isn't a recommendation from the CDC for college students to get the MenB, however, students should consider getting this additional protection against meningococcal disease.

Please feel free to contact Drew University Health Service at [973-408-3414](tel:973-408-3414) should you have any questions about meningococcal disease or the MenB vaccine.