

Riverview Middle School  
300 Riverside Circle  
Plymouth, Wisconsin 53073

Telephone (920) 892-4353  
Ext 2105



## **Nursing Services Health Room**

**Sara Stout, RN  
Anne Nelson, RN**

Dear Parents of 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Students:

As school nurses at Riverview Middle School, we are writing to inform you about the dangers of meningococcal disease, commonly known as bacterial meningitis, a rare but potentially fatal infection that can occur among teenagers and college students. While meningococcal disease is rare and difficult to contract, it is very serious. There is a meningococcal vaccine that may help to prevent this infection.

Meningococcal bacteria can potentially be transmitted through close contact with an infected person. It can also be transmitted through direct contact with respiratory and/or oral secretions from an infected person (for example, through sharing drinking containers or kissing). Teenagers and college students are at increased risk for meningococcal disease compared to the general population, accounting for nearly 30 percent of all U.S. cases every year. Meningococcal disease can be misdiagnosed as something less serious, because early symptoms like high fever, severe headache, nausea, vomiting and stiff neck, are similar to those of common viral illnesses. The disease can progress rapidly and can cause death or permanent disability within 48 hours of initial symptoms. Up to 83 percent of all cases among teens and college students may potentially be prevented through immunization, the most effective way to prevent this disease. A meningococcal vaccine is available that protects against four out of five strains of bacterium that cause meningococcal disease in the U.S.

**It is recommended that children get the first Meningococcal immunization at 11-12 years of age. A booster shot is recommended for teens at age 16 to continue providing protection when their risk for meningococcal disease is highest. For more information about meningococcal disease and immunization, please feel free to contact us directly at Riverview Middle School. You could also visit the immunization tab on the health services link on the Plymouth School District website to learn more about meningococcal disease, vaccine information, and public health resources. **Talk with your child's Primary Care Provider about getting immunized against Meningitis.****

Thank you for your time,

Anne Nelson & Sara Stout