Dear Students and Parents,

The University Wellness Center is continuing to closely follow the CDC’s recommendations about the approved additional vaccine (commonly called Men B) used for invasive meningococcal disease (sepsis and meningitis) caused by N. meningitidis. Roughly a third of the cases in the college student population are caused by serogroup B. The standard Meningococcal Vaccine (Menactra) that we currently require does not have any protection against Men B, but does provide adequate protection for other types of bacterial meningitis.

A recent recommendation by the vaccine advisory committee of the CDC states that the serogroup B vaccine "may be administered to normal, healthy adolescents and young adults" and this recommendation is a Category B recommendation, meaning that decision is individualized by the family doctor, or by patient request. A "Category A" recommendation is more definitive - for example, students are required to get the Menactra, along with the others we require or they can't register.

There are two Meningitis B vaccines licensed in the United States. They are Trumenba (a 2-3 dose series) and Bexsero (a 2 dose series). The University Wellness Center highly recommends vaccination for serogroup B, N. meningitidis. Until there is a more definitive recommendation by the CDC, insurance plans may not pay for the MenB vaccine, at least not consistently. However, we thought it important to bring this development to your attention so that you can ask your family doctor or the staff at the University Wellness Center about its availability and your options should you choose to receive the vaccine.

Thank you for your consideration,

Michelle Val, MD
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