

**PARENT/GUARDIAN FORM 26**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cadet Name Last, First, MI

SUBJECT: MENINGOCOCCAL MENINGITIS VACCINE

1. Massanutten Military Academy believes that it is very important for all of our cadets to receive the meningococcal meningitis vaccine. It has been found that students who live in residence halls are at an increased risk for contracting meningococcal disease, a potentially fatal bacterial infection commonly referred to as meningitis. In fact, students living in residence halls are found to have a six-fold increased risk for the disease. The American College Health Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommend that students living in residence halls learn more about meningitis and vaccination. At least 70% of all cases of meningococcal disease in students living in residence halls are vaccine preventable.

2. Information concerning the disease and the vaccine:

- a. **What is meningococcal meningitis?** Meningitis is rare. But when it strikes, this potentially fatal bacterial disease can lead to swelling of fluid surrounding the brain and spinal column as well as severe and permanent disabilities, such as hearing loss, brain damage, seizures, limb amputation, and even death.
- b. **How is it spread?** Meningococcal meningitis is spread through the air via respiratory secretions or close contact with an infected person. This can include coughing, sneezing, kissing, or sharing items like utensils, cigarettes, and drinking glasses.
- c. **What are the symptoms?** Symptoms of meningococcal meningitis often resemble the flu and can include high fever, severe headache, stiff neck, rash, nausea, vomiting, lethargy, and confusion.
- d. **Who is at risk?** Certain students, particularly ones who live in residence halls, have been found to have an increased risk for meningococcal meningitis. Other students should also consider the vaccination to reduce their risk for the disease.
- e. **Can meningitis be prevented?** Yes. A safe and effective vaccine is available to protect against four of the five most common strains of the disease. The vaccine provides protection for approximately three to five years. Adverse reactions to the meningitis vaccine are mild and infrequent, consisting primarily of redness and pain at the injection site and rarely a fever. As with any vaccine, vaccination against meningitis may not protect 100 percent of all susceptible individuals. It does not protect against viral meningitis.
- f. **For more information:** To learn more about meningitis and the vaccine, visit the websites of the Centers for Disease Control and Preventions (CDC), [www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo).

3. Many states have recently passed legislation mandating the meningitis vaccine for students living in residence halls. Massanutten Military Academy is recommending that all residence hall cadets have the vaccination. If a parent or guardian does not want their child to have the vaccination, the parent must sign the declination statement after having received information concerning the benefits of the meningitis vaccine.

4. Parents certification:

a. My child, the above named cadet, has received the meningococcal meningitis vaccination. **If the vaccination was received, please attach a verification of the vaccination. The verification must include a certified physician's signature.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

b. I, the parent/guardian of the above named cadet have read and completely understand the information provided on this form and fully aware of the risks associated with meningococcal disease and the availability and effectiveness of the vaccinations against the disease. I knowingly decided not to have the above named cadet receive a vaccination against meningococcal disease. If you have any questions, please discuss this issue with your family doctor or the MMA Nurse.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_