

World Immunization Week | 24th-30th April 2024

Introduction

This messaging has been created for our supporters all over the world, so they can use this and our social media resources to raise awareness of meningitis and the vaccinations available to protect against it this World Immunization Week.

It provides a bank of meningitis-specific messages for World Immunization Week which are universally applicable and can be adapted to any country's specific health context.

Please adapt this to suit your activity, combining any of this messaging with the freely available social media templates also provided as part of this toolkit.

Let's use this year's World Immunization Week to tell people why protecting yourself and those you love against the devastating effects of meningitis should matter to us all.

Key messages

Meningitis vaccines: life-saving protection for the ones you love

- Meningitis is the inflammation of the meninges, membranes covering the brain, and has many possible causes.
- It is hard to diagnose and progresses rapidly, leaving little time to react.¹
- Meningitis can kill in as little as 24 hours, but there are vaccines that protect against the most common types. Talk to your health care professional about what meningitis vaccines are available to protect you and your family.
- Meningitis vaccines are safe, effective and give you peace of mind, so you know you and your loved ones are protected.
- Vaccines have been shown to effectively prevent meningitis in many countries around the world, saving millions of lives.
- Everyone who is at risk of meningitis, in every country around the world, deserves the life-saving protection that meningitis vaccines give.

Meningitis vaccines: together, let's defeat meningitis

- Bacterial meningitis is the deadliest form of meningitis, with the World Health Organization estimating that around 1 in 6 people who get it will die.² Yet many people are not aware of the need to get vaccinated to prevent it.

¹ <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/meningitis>

² [Meningitis: key facts](#). World Health Organization, Geneva, April 2023 (accessed January 2024).

- Meningitis can have life-changing impacts. Across the world, bacterial meningitis leaves 1 in 5 people with lifelong disabilities. These include hearing loss, brain damage, limb loss and epilepsy.^{2,3}
- The World Health Organization's Global Road Map to Defeat Meningitis by 2030 aims to reduce the number of deaths caused by vaccine-preventable bacterial meningitis by 70%. Implementing its goals would save an estimated 200,000 lives a year.⁴

Meningitis vaccines: the chance of a life free from meningitis

- Meningitis can strike anyone at any time, but some people are particularly at risk because of age, crowded living conditions and immune deficiencies such as HIV. Babies, children and young adults are some of the groups most at risk of meningitis.²
- No child, and no family, should have to live with the devastating impact of meningitis.
- Meningitis is largely vaccine-preventable and there are many vaccines available throughout someone's life to protect against it.
- Vaccination gives your loved ones the chance of a life free from meningitis.
- Now is the time to catch up on life-saving vaccines, reducing the risk of getting such a serious, life-threatening infection as meningitis.

³ [Global Health Estimates \(who.int\)](#): deaths by cause, age, sex by country and region, 2000-2019. World Health Organization, Geneva, 2020 (accessed January 2024).

⁴ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/09/1101352>