

LET'S FLY THE MENINGITIS FLAG



THIS IS MORE THAN A FLAG

This is a symbol of determination,
to unite the world in the fight
against meningitis.

A rallying cry, to protect millions
of people, of all ages, from this
devastating disease.

A beacon of hope, to support those
affected by meningitis every day.

An exciting new phase, building
upon the work of an ambitious
global movement.

This is the work of the meningitis
community – local groups,
world-class athletes, and
global organisations.

This is not just a flag.

This is the start of
the end of meningitis.

Protect. Support. Defeat.

Let's fly the Meningitis Flag.

#MeningitisFlag
#DefeatMeningitis

OUR FLAG

The meningitis community is a powerful force for progress, but it has never had a unifying symbol it can rally behind. Until now.

The Meningitis Flag is inspired and co-created by para-athletes affected by this devastating disease and the world's leading meningitis charity – the Meningitis Research Foundation and Confederation of Meningitis Organisations (CoMO), working with Sanofi.

The flag is a symbol that everyone – patient groups, their loved ones, global organisations, the medical community and beyond – can rally behind, to help accelerate the work to defeat meningitis by 2030.¹

YELLOW: PROTECT

The yellow semi-circle represents the patient as the bright, hopeful centre of the movement, symbolising that every individual is important.



PURPLE: SUPPORT

Protecting the individual is a purple triangle – a nod to families who play a supportive role. It is pointing upwards like an arrow, symbolising speed and positivity in the race against meningitis.

BLUE: DEFEAT

The final layer is a sea of blue, symbolising a sense of steadfastness in the movement to defeat the disease.

FLYING THE FLAG TO RAISE AWARENESS

MENINGITIS AFFECTS MILLIONS EACH YEAR.²
WE WANT MILLIONS MORE TO BE AWARE OF IT.

Meningitis is a devastating disease that affects millions around the world.² Despite efforts to combat it, awareness and progress is behind other disease areas.¹

To change this, the World Health Organization (WHO) led the development of the Global Roadmap to Defeat Meningitis by 2030 – an ambitious goal many organisations are working to achieve.²

The Meningitis Flag builds upon this incredible work, as a unifying symbol that can help raise greater awareness of the disease and engage the public in the fight against meningitis.

Four reasons to defeat meningitis.

1 Meningitis affects more than 2.5 million people globally each year.²

- 1/10 die as a result.²
- 2/10 are left with an impairment like brain injury or amputation.⁴

2 Approximately half of all meningitis deaths are children under 5, but it can affect anyone at any age.¹

3 Meningitis disproportionately affects the poorest communities. 93% of healthy life lost to meningitis in 2019 was in low and lower middle-income countries.³

4 Despite major progress over the last 20 years, meningitis is still the world's 6th largest infectious disease killer.³

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MENINGITIS

What is meningitis?

- Meningitis is the swelling of the meninges, which is the lining around the brain and spinal cord. It is usually caused by infection and bacterial meningitis is the most common dangerous type of meningitis.⁴
- It is a life-threatening illness that can affect anyone of any age.¹

How families can protect themselves and their loved ones.

- Bacterial meningitis is a vaccine preventable disease,⁴ so it's important to speak to a doctor about prevention.
- Meningitis can kill within 24 hours, and available vaccines may not protect against all strains nor bacteria, so it's vital to recognize its symptoms.⁴

What are the meningitis symptoms?

Not everyone gets all symptoms. Symptoms can appear in any order.^{4,5}

- Fever and/or vomiting
- Severe headache
- Cold hands and feet / shivering
- Rash (which can be anywhere on the body)
- Stiff neck (less common in young children)
- Dislike of bright lights (less common in young children)
- Very sleepy / vacant / difficult to wake
- Confused/delirious
- Seizures
- Limb / joint / muscle pain (which can be with stomach pain / diarrhoea)
- Pale or mottled skin

Someone who has meningitis can become seriously ill very quickly,⁴ so it's important that people trust their instincts and get medical help fast by speaking to a healthcare professional.

WHAT IT MEANS TO FIGHT BACK

Hear from some of the strongest, most positive individuals we know, whose lives have been affected by meningitis.

"My family was really the most important thing when I got meningitis... thanks to my relatives, my parents, my entourage, I knew how to put negative things aside and think more positively. To get out of this headspace as quickly as possible and dream no matter what."

- *Théo Curin, Para-swimming*

"In Spain, what we've been doing for the last three years is to talk with public health authorities and share our personal stories... when you explain the horrendous consequences of this disease, they listen, they understand, and they change the programmes."

- *Elena Moya, Spanish Association against Meningitis and Europe Regional Coordinator, Confederation of Meningitis Organisations (CoMO)*

"The importance for me of defeating meningitis is intensely personal. My middle child died as a result of group B strep sepsis and if we can prevent that happening to somebody else, then that's hugely important to do."

- *Jane Plumb, Chief Executive, Group B Strep Support and Chair and Europe Regional Representative, CoMO*

"Sport plays a big part in my life. When I was younger, I used to go to a thing called LimbPower Games, where I got to be with other children that lost limbs and try out new sports... and it was the first time I ever saw someone like me swim. And then after that I knew that's what I wanted to do."

- *Ellie Challis, Para-swimming*

"My support first began in the hospital, in the Intensive Care Unit thanks to doctors who were well-prepared. And then I received very important support from the Spanish Association Against Meningitis who immediately contacted me to offer moral support, not only to me, but also to my relatives."

- *Davide Morana, Para-athletics*

"As a doctor, I find it very difficult and devastating to see a happy and healthy individual or a child end up in an ICU with meningitis. Many of them lose their lives and those who survive do pay a high price... the way forward is to defeat meningitis and I think that is where we are all working towards."

- *Dr Ravi, Asia Pacific Regional Representative, Brain Child Trust and Asia Pacific Regional Representative, CoMO*



Confederation of Meningitis Organisations representatives from all regions of the world



Ellie Challis – Para-swimming



Davide Morana – Para-athletics



Théo Curin – Para-swimming

THE MAKING OF THE FLAG

Meet Laura Spring

With sights set on defeating meningitis by 2030, the meningitis community needed a symbol to engage with and rally the public. So we decided to create the Meningitis Flag.

We enlisted the help of textile designer Laura Spring to design the flag. With her expertise in fabrics, connection to meningitis and passion for working with communities, she was the perfect person to bring the flag to life.

Laura collaborated with three para-athletes and a dozen MRF and CoMO members worldwide to create the Meningitis Flag.

The result is a bold, simple and vibrant design that captures the positivity and strength of the movement.



Watch the story
behind the
meningitis flag

PROTECT. SUPPORT. DEFEAT. LET'S FLY THE MENINGITIS FLAG

The Meningitis Research Foundation, the Confederation of Meningitis Organisations (CoMO), Sanofi and three para-athletes are proud partners in this initiative. Together, we can raise awareness of meningitis and accelerate progress towards defeating this disease.

About the Meningitis Research Foundation and the Confederation of Meningitis Organisations

The Meningitis Research Foundation is a leading international charity, working to defeat meningitis and septicaemia since 1989.

The Confederation of Meningitis Organisations (CoMO) is their global network of patient groups, meningitis advocates and health professionals who operate in more than 50 countries worldwide.

Together they fund and support vital scientific research; campaign and provide information to the public, health professionals and researchers to enable prevention, early diagnosis and treatment; and raise awareness in communities across the world.

Alongside this, they offer individual support to people affected by meningitis and septicaemia, whether they are living with a disability or are coping with the death of a loved one.

The Meningitis Research Foundation and CoMO have been working alongside many global health partners to implement the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Global Road Map to Defeat Meningitis by 2030, which aims to:¹

- Reduce new cases of meningitis by 50%
- Reduce deaths by 70%
- End epidemics
- Ensure people get the support and aftercare they need

More information on:

meningitis.org
comomeningitis.org

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sanofi

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