

June 24, 2022

**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN OKALOOSA COUNTY  
IS NOW PROVIDING THE MENINGOCOCCAL VACCINE TO  
ADULTS 18 AND OLDER**



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**FT. WALTON BEACH, Fla.** – In response to the meningococcal outbreak in Florida, the Florida Department of in Okaloosa County (DOH-Okaloosa) is now providing the meningococcal vaccine at no-cost to individuals 18 years of age and older.

The following groups should consider vaccination with a meningococcal conjugate (MenACWY) vaccine during this outbreak:

- Men who have sex with men ages 18 and older
- People living with HIV ages 18 and older
- LGBTQ+ ages 18 and older
- Immunocompromised individuals ages 18 years and older
- People in any groups listed above who received their MenACWY vaccine more than 5 years ago.

Individuals will need to schedule an appointment by calling 850-833-9246.

Thus far, the number of cases identified in 2022 surpasses the 5-year average of meningococcal disease cases in Florida. Meningococcal disease can be prevented and treated and the best way to protect against meningococcal disease is by getting vaccinated.

This is a serious disease caused by bacteria called *Neisseria meningitidis*. Fortunately, these bacteria are not as contagious as germs that cause the common cold or flu. People do not catch the bacteria through casual contact or by breathing air where someone with meningococcal disease has been. It requires close contact over a period of time, or direct contact such as kissing or sharing drinks.

Early symptoms of the disease include fever, headache, stiff neck, nausea, vomiting, light sensitivity, confusion, and rash. Anyone who has been exposed or develops symptoms should be evaluated by a health care provider immediately. This is a rare but potentially devastating disease.

For more information on meningococcal disease and preventive vaccines, visit [ThePowerToProtect.org](http://ThePowerToProtect.org).

## **About the Florida Department of Health**

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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