



## San Francisco Department of Public Health

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **SF Health Department recommends vaccination against Meningococcal disease for HIV-positive people and gay men**

***Outbreaks in southern California announced by State Health Department  
Vaccine for at-risk groups is recommended, effective and widely available***

***It's Pride week, take charge of your health!***

SAN FRANCISCO (June 24, 2016) – The San Francisco Department of Public Health recommends that HIV positive people, gay men and other men or transgender people who have sex with men get vaccinated against meningococcal disease, a rare but serious illness caused by meningococcal bacteria.

The advice is consistent with the U.S. Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices decision this week to recommend the meningococcal ACWY vaccine for HIV positive people age 2 months and older. It follows an announcement today by the state health department of a new outbreak of meningococcal disease cases in Los Angeles and Orange counties among gay and bisexual men, and encourages gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men to get vaccinated.

“Here in San Francisco it is Pride week, with lots of visitors from around the state, the country and the world coming to town to celebrate,” said Dr. Naveena Bobba, Deputy Health Officer for the City and County of San Francisco. “There will be many parties and festivities. We encourage revelers to consider the meningococcal ACWY vaccine as a way to take charge of their health. The vaccine is widely available and very effective in preventing this disease from spreading.”

Gay men and other men or transgender people who have sex with men who have close or intimate contact with multiple partners, or who regularly visit crowded venues such as bars or parties, or who vape or smoke cigarettes, e-cigarettes, marijuana, hookahs or illegal drugs may be at increased risk of meningococcal disease. Meningococcal bacteria are transmitted from person-to-person through close personal contact involving secretions from the nose and throat. Smoking or being around smokers increases the risk of transmission.

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Vaccination is available to everyone through their primary care providers, at the Health Department's Adult Immunization and Travel Clinic (AITC) and at many pharmacies. San Francisco residents who cannot access those options can get vaccinated at San Francisco City Clinic. Protection usually begins seven to 10 days after vaccination. All HIV-infected adults should receive two doses of vaccine, eight to 12 weeks apart. Gay men and other men or transgender people who have sex with men, and who are not HIV-infected, should receive one dose.

Meningococcal disease can result in meningitis or blood infection. Symptoms begin a few days after exposure and may include fever, chills, vomiting, severe headache, stiff neck, confusion, rash, nausea or vomiting, and generalized muscle pains. Anyone who develops these symptoms, especially those with HIV, should immediately seek medical care, by calling 911 or going to the nearest emergency room.

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For more information:

SF Dept of Public Health: <http://www.sfcddcp.org/meningococcal.html>

CA Dept of Public Health: <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/>

For vaccines:

Adult Immunization and Travel Clinic: <http://www.sfcddcp.org/aitc.html>

San Francisco City Clinic: <http://sfcityclinic.org/>

Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC) Vaccine Finder

[http://www.vaccines.gov/more\\_info/features/healthmapvaccinefinder.html](http://www.vaccines.gov/more_info/features/healthmapvaccinefinder.html)