

# Meningococcal Disease Awareness Secondary School

Age Group: Years 8-12 and Year 7 (check suitability of content)      Duration: 45 mins to 1 hour (or one period)

## Links to HPE Learning Outcomes:

- Students know and understand health and physical activity concepts that enable informed decisions for a healthy, active lifestyle.
- Students demonstrate self-management skills which enable them to make informed decisions for healthy, active lifestyles.

## Lesson Aims

- Students learn about meningococcal disease & why they are in a high risk group for the disease.
- Students understand the AYF motto of “be aware and don’t share” and safe hygiene practices/strategies to prevent meningococcal disease, including vaccination.
- Students understand the symptoms of meningococcal disease and to recognise when to tell a trusted adult they are unwell.

## Resources & Equipment

- Amanda Young Foundation Secondary School Power point
- Equipment for showing the power point
- Facts sheets at website [www.amandayoungfoundation.org.au](http://www.amandayoungfoundation.org.au)

## Lesson Summary

- This lesson introduces meningococcal disease to students and explains why they are a high-risk group for the disease and why they must therefore be aware and proactive in prevention and identification of symptoms. Students learn the symptoms of meningococcal disease and the strategies they can adopt to lessen their risk, including vaccination. The quiz gives students a chance to be interactive and have fun while they learn about meningococcal disease. The DVD Don’t Catch the Killer is embedded into the power point in two separate parts – it complements the lesson, consolidating the information in the power point and showcasing real life stories of young people who have contracted and survived the disease.

## Lesson Plan

Time	Activity	Resources
2 mins	<p data-bbox="342 158 501 193">Mental Set</p> <p data-bbox="342 212 1794 325">Ask students to raise their hand to guess what item in the room has the most bacteria on it that can make them really sick. Most students will say the bin, the door handle, their hands, etc, the answer is: their mouths. Our mouths contain on average 500 bacteria.</p> <p data-bbox="342 344 1800 458">Explain that today's lesson is about a bacteria that up to 20% of us will be carrying in our throats right now. The meningococcal bacteria usually live harmlessly in many people's throats but occasionally it gets past the immune system and multiplies rapidly, killing within 24 hours. It is a rare disease.</p>	SLIDE 1
3 mins	<p data-bbox="342 483 521 518">Introduction</p> <p data-bbox="342 537 1733 683">Briefly explain why the Amanda Young Foundation was set up. Explain that Amanda contracted meningococcal disease and her parents set up the Foundation to help prevent other young people getting the disease. Talk about how Amanda was a fit and healthy athlete, which shows that this disease is indiscriminate. Answer any questions students may have about Amanda.</p>	SLIDE 2
7 min	<p data-bbox="342 764 844 799">Introducing Meningococcal Disease</p> <p data-bbox="342 818 1787 963">Explain that meningococcal disease is caused by bacteria that is extremely aggressive and can cause death within 24 hours. The disease can strike anybody, anytime but is most common in children and young adults. Because it can kill so quickly it is essential that it is caught early, so everybody needs to know the symptoms.</p> <p data-bbox="342 1042 566 1077">Slide dot points</p> <ul data-bbox="394 1096 1429 1294" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="394 1096 1084 1131">• acute infection caused by bacteria not a virus</li> <li data-bbox="394 1150 1429 1185">• different strains of the disease - strains C, B, W &amp; Y found in Australia</li> <li data-bbox="394 1204 1191 1240">• meningococcal bacteria can double every 30 minutes</li> <li data-bbox="394 1259 1200 1294">• early detection and medical treatment vital to survival</li> </ul>	SLIDE 3

4 mins	Show part 1 of Don't Catch the Killer	SLIDE 4 & 5
3 mins	Discuss National Graph of MD cases – spike in 2017. Vaccination has reduced cases, but we cannot afford to be complacent.	SLIDE 6
5 mins	<p>Go through the dot points on each slide and don't forget to emphasise - why teenagers and young adults are a high-risk group for the disease.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As they have active social lifestyles and are in contact with a large number of people on a regular basis, they increase their chances of coming into contact with the bacteria.</li> <li>- Explain how having a reduced immunity from a cold or virus can make you more susceptible to bacteria. Elaborate on the "intimate kissing", explaining that kissing your immediate family or your boyfriend/girlfriend is okay because you have to live your life, but the risk increases if they go around "snogging" a lot of people!</li> </ul> <p>Explain how the majority of patients survive meningococcal disease because of their awareness of symptoms so they catch it early. Explain that if left untreated you will die – it is not possible to survive meningococcal disease without medical intervention.</p> <p>Vaccination is the first step to protection.</p> <p>If at this point, some students may express concern about the seriousness of the disease if left untreated – reassure them that the disease is rare, and the importance of vaccination and good hygiene practices will reduce their risk greatly.</p>	SLIDES 7 to 11
6 mins	<p>Quiz</p> <p>Explain that soon all students will stand to take part in the quiz &amp; they need to choose an answer – either A or B. If they choose A – hands on head, B - hands on butts. If a student gets an answer wrong, they need to sit down. Those left standing at the end of the quiz will either win a prize (if it's a small number) or a round of applause (if there's a lot of them)!</p> <p>The quiz runs from Slide 13-18.</p> <p>Answers – Q1: B, Q2: B, Q3: B, Q4: A, Q5: B, Q6: A,</p>	SLIDES 12 to 18
5 mins	Symptoms & Prevention	



	<p>Slide 18: Explain that the most deadly form of meningococcal disease is septicaemia because it affects the blood, but both are extremely aggressive diseases.</p> <p>Ask students to raise their hands if they have ever had a 24 hour bug or the 'flu. Read through the following symptoms and ask them to keep their hand raised if they experienced any of them during their 'bug': shivering, chills, nausea, vomiting, painful joints, headache, drowsiness. Most students will have their hand up throughout the list. Explain that this is one of the reasons that meningococcal disease is so dangerous – it needs to be diagnosed early, but the early symptoms often just resemble a typical bug or gastro. Emphasise that the way they will know it's something more serious is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The symptoms will worsen very quickly – they will feel worse and worse from hour to hour.</li> <li>• They will feel sicker than they ever have before.</li> <li>• Their gut instinct will tell them this is something serious.</li> </ul> <p>Explain that the rash is a sign that the disease has reached a critical stage – it is actually blood leaking from damaged vessels into the skin. Emphasise that they should never wait for the rash in order to self-diagnose meningococcal disease as by then it could be too late. If they ever have a rash plus some meningococcal symptoms, they should seek emergency treatment asap!</p>	Powerpoint Slides 19 - 23
5 mins	<p>Treatment &amp; Prevention</p> <p>Go through the points, elaborating that they know their bodies and need to trust their instincts. Don't be afraid of making a fuss or being wrong – the best result is that they ARE wrong! Better to be wrong than have meningococcal disease. Stress that when they are feeling sick, they need to let a trusted adult know so that they can check on them. Share any anecdotal stories of MD that you may know. (see website)</p> <p>Explain importance of not sharing items that go in the mouth, and to practice high hygiene standards. Don't sneeze into your hand as you then transfer saliva to door handles, etc, instead sneeze into your elbow -very handy if you also need to wipe your nose ;). Emphasise the importance of staying away from crowds when sick with a cold – when your immune system is under stress you are more susceptible to the meningococcal bacteria. Often the disease is preceded by a virus or cold.</p>	SLIDES 19 - 23
4 mins	DVD Don't Catch the Killer – Part 2	SLIDE 24
5 to 10 mins	<p>Summary &amp; Sharing Information</p> <p>Go through summary, elaborating on each point.</p>	SLIDES 25 & 26

	If there is time – do the sharing activity, if not, quickly ask the whole groups for one important thing they have learned today. Invite students to like our Facebook Page!	
2 mins	IF TIME – Show BBC SNEEZING VIDEO	SLIDE 27

### Notes

Mental Set: a teaching strategy when you start the lesson by posing an interesting question or telling an anecdote to get students set for learning.