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**College Students and Meningococcal Disease: Are Students Protected?**

*National Foundation for Infectious Diseases Launches New Educational Initiative Featuring “No Regrets” Public Service Announcement*

**Bethesda, MD (August 9, 2016)** - As college campuses prepare for the start of the school year, the National Foundation for Infectious Disease (NFID) is launching a new educational effort aimed at increasing awareness among the college community about meningococcal disease prevention.

NFID's new meningococcal disease college toolkit (<http://www.nfid.org/meningitis-toolkit>) features tools and resources to help raise awareness about the importance of meningococcal disease prevention among healthcare professionals, college health administrators, students and the public. The toolkit includes posters, infographics, survivor stories, frequently asked questions, outbreak response materials and an animated public service announcement (PSA) titled, [#NoRegrets](#), which reminds adolescents and young adults that while there are some things they might regret, such as not studying for an exam or forgetting lines in the school play, they will not regret getting vaccinated.

Recent meningococcal outbreaks on U.S. college campuses illustrate the importance of vaccination against this devastating and potentially deadly infection. In recognition of National Immunization Awareness Month (August), NFID urges all students, parents and healthcare professionals, on campus and in the surrounding community, to learn more about meningococcal disease and how to prevent it.

“Vaccination continues to be a critical part of college health communications, particularly for meningococcal disease,” says William Schaffner, MD, NFID Medical Director. “When cases or outbreaks occur on a college campus, it can be devastating and the cause of much anxiety. NFID is working to increase awareness and education about the disease and vaccines available to help prevent it.”

Adolescents and young adults age 16-23 years old are at increased risk of contracting meningococcal disease. Routinely recommended vaccines available in the U.S. protect against four of the major strains of the disease, A, C, W and Y. In 2015, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved a vaccine for serogroup B disease, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) made a permissive (Category B) recommendation for its use for in young adults age 16-23 years. Serogroup B meningococcal disease was responsible for recent outbreaks at the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB), Santa Clara University, Rutgers University, and other college campuses.

**About Meningococcal Disease**

Meningococcal disease is a serious bacterial infection that most often leads to severe swelling of the tissues surrounding the brain and spinal cord (meningitis) or infection of the bloodstream (meningococemia). Even with antibiotic treatment, 10 to 15 out of 100 people infected with meningococcal disease will die; about 11 to 19 out of every 100 survivors will have long-term disabilities, such as loss of limb(s), deafness, nervous system problems, or brain damage.

**About the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases**

The National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization founded in 1973 and dedicated to educating the public and healthcare professionals about the causes, treatment and prevention of infectious diseases across the lifespan.

This initiative was made possible by an unrestricted educational grant from Pfizer Inc. and GSK. NFID [policies](#) restrict funders from controlling program content.

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