

Meningococcal ACW₁₃₅Y vaccination

Meningitis belt	Vaccination is recommended for travellers who reside in the meningitis belt during the dry season (between end of December and end of June) and who either: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• have close contact with the local population (e.g. family visits, medical work, etc.),• stay there for four weeks or more,• have no or a badly functioning spleen (e.g. sickle cell anaemia),• suffer from certain forms of immunosuppression.
Pilgrimage to Mecca	Vaccination is compulsory for everyone from two years old going on pilgrimage to Mecca.
Students	In some countries (e.g. United Kingdom, United States of America) a proof of vaccination against meningococcal ACW ₁₃₅ Y is requested from foreign students.

1. Meningococcal ACW₁₃₅Y vaccine

In Belgium, the conjugate meningococcal C vaccine is offered free of charge in **the basic vaccination schedule**. This vaccine does not protect against the other meningococci. It can be replaced by the conjugate meningococcal ACW₁₃₅Y vaccine, but this is not free of charge.

In some countries (such as the Netherlands) vaccination against meningococcal ACW₁₃₅Y is offered as a standard option. Vaccination against meningococcal B is not a standard vaccine in Belgium.

There is no non-conjugated meningococcal ACW₁₃₅Y vaccine available in Belgium.

There are two conjugate vaccines against meningococcal ACW₁₃₅Y on the market in Belgium Menveo® and Nimenrix®. These vaccines are interchangeable.

Indications for meningococcal ACW₁₃₅Y vaccination by travellers

2. Vaccination schedule

2.1 Adults and children over two years of age

- The conjugate meningococcal ACW₁₃₅Y vaccine (Nimenrix® or Menveo®) consists of a single injection. For some forms of **immunosuppression**, two doses are recommended.
- Boosters: It is still unclear how long the protection lasts, but at least five years. For the time being, booster vaccination is recommended after five years in case of continued exposure.

2.2 Vaccination schedule for younger children

Menveo® is registered for use from the age of two years.

Nimenrix® is registered for use from the age of six weeks.

Age	
6 weeks – 6 months	Two doses at two-month intervals
Older than six months	One dose

Boosters: Infants who have received their primary immunisation course at the age of six weeks to twelve months should receive a booster dose at the age of twelve months, at least two months apart from the last vaccination with Nimenrix®.

3. Administration of the vaccination certificate for pilgrims to Mecca

People applying for a visa for a pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj or Umrah) are required to present a certificate of vaccination against meningococcal ACW_{135Y}, which must meet certain conditions:

- The vaccine must have been administered at least ten days before departure.
- The vaccination certificate is usually valid for three years.
- If a conjugate vaccine against meningococcal ACW_{135Y} is administered, the certificate is valid for five years provided that the doctor explicitly notes that it is a conjugate vaccine and also notes the product name.
- In theory, it does not need to be noted in the **International certificate for vaccination and prophylaxis**, but in practice this is often required.

4. Useful links

- [RHC advice on immunosuppression](#)
- [HHC advice on meningococcal disease](#)
- [Guideline meningococcal invasive infection](#)

5. References

- [HHC advice on immunosuppression](#)
- [Product information sheets](#) Nimenrix and Menveo