

## Meningococcal ACW<sub>135</sub>Y vaccination

Meningitis belt	Vaccination is recommended for travellers who reside in the <b>meningitis belt</b> during the <b>dry season</b> (between end of December and end of June) and who either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• have close contact with the local population (e.g. family visits, medical work, etc.),</li><li>• stay there for four weeks or more,</li><li>• have no or a badly functioning spleen (e.g. sickle cell anaemia),</li><li>• suffer from certain forms of <b>immunosuppression</b>.</li></ul>
Pilgrimage to <b>Mecca</b>	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 <sub>135</sub> Y is requested from foreign students.

### 1. Meningococcal ACW<sub>135</sub>Y 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 ACW<sub>135</sub>Y vaccine, but this is not free of charge.

In some countries (such as the Netherlands) vaccination against meningococcal ACW<sub>135</sub>Y is offered as a standard option. Vaccination against meningococcal B is not a standard vaccine in Belgium.

There is no non-conjugated meningococcal ACW<sub>135</sub>Y vaccine available in Belgium.

There are two conjugate vaccines against meningococcal ACW<sub>135</sub>Y on the market in Belgium Menveo® and Nimenrix®. These vaccines are interchangeable.

## Indications for meningococcal ACW<sub>135</sub>Y vaccination by travellers

### 2. Vaccination schedule

#### 2.1 Adults and children over two years of age

- The conjugate meningococcal ACW<sub>135</sub>Y 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<sub>135Y</sub>, 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<sub>135Y</sub> 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