**Meningococcal disease**

* Meningococcal disease is a rare, but serious illness that most commonly presents with meningitis (inflammation of the lining of the brain and spinal cord) and/or septicaemia (blood poisoning).
* It is caused by meningococcal bacteria that can spread from person-to-person through close, prolonged or intimate contact.
* It can affect all age groups but is more common in young children, adolescents and young adults.
* There are different strains, or serogroups, of meningococcal bacteria. You can be vaccinated against strains A, B, C, W and Y.

Vaccination is the best way to prevent the spread of meningococcal disease.

Free meningococcal ACWY vaccine is available for infants at 12 months of age and students in Year 10 of secondary school.

Catch-up vaccination is also available for young people under the age of 20 years.

Free meningococcal B vaccine is available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander infants at 2 (from 6 weeks of age), 4 and 12 months of age.

Catch-up vaccination is also available for children under the age of 2 years.