Meningococcal Group B Vaccine

For detailed information about BEXSERO, please review the full Prescribing Information on the BEXSERO website: http://www.bexsero.com/assets/final-labeling-text.pdf

Q: What is this vaccine for?
A: BEXSERO is a new vaccine developed to help protect against the “B” strain of a bacteria called Neisseria meningitidis. This bacterium can invade the body and cause meningitis (inflammation of the lining of the brain and spinal cord) or bacteremia/septicemia (infection of the bloodstream). BEXSERO is approved for use in individuals 10 through 25 years of age.

Q: I think I have already received a meningitis vaccine – why do I need another one?
A: Older meningococcal vaccines only covered the A, C, Y and W strains of the bacteria, not the B strain that is common now, especially in outbreaks on college campuses. The type B vaccines have only been available since October 2014, so if your meningococcal vaccine was given before this date, you did not receive a type B vaccination.

Q: How is it given?
A: BEXSERO is given as intramuscular (IM) injections in the upper arm. It is a 2-dose series given at 0 and 30-60 days.

Q: How good is the protection?
A: No vaccine is 100% effective in all patients. The vaccine primes your body’s own immune system to fight off an infection, so if you encounter a bacteria type that is covered by the vaccine, you have a much better chance to fight the infection, but it is not a guarantee of immunity.

Q: What are the side effects?
A: BEXSERO has a side effect profile that is common with vaccines in general. Pain at the injection site is the most common side effect (>80% of patients). Other common side effects are: muscle ache, fatigue, headache, nausea, redness or swelling at the injection site. Allergic reactions are possible but not common. Tell your provider ahead of time if you have a latex allergy.

Q: I am feeling ill – should I get the vaccine or wait?
A: Per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), people with minor illnesses such as a cold can be vaccinated. Anyone who is moderately to severely ill should wait until they recover or consult their physician prior to receiving the vaccine.

Q: What if there is a serious reaction? What should I look for?
A: Look for anything that concerns you, such as signs of a severe allergic reaction, very high fever, or behavior changes. Signs of a severe allergic reaction can include: hives, swelling of the face and throat, difficulty breathing, a fast heartbeat, dizziness and weakness. These would start a few minutes to a few hours after the vaccination.

Q: What should I do?
A: If you think it is a severe allergic reaction or other emergency that cannot wait, call 9-1-1 or get to the person to the nearest hospital. Otherwise, call your doctor. Afterward, the reaction should be reported to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS). Your doctor might file this report, or you can do it yourself through the VAERS website at http://www.vaers.hhs.gov, or by calling 1-800-822-7967. (VAERS is only for reporting reactions. They do not give medical advice.)

Q: What is The National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program?
A: The National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (VICP) is a federal program that was created to compensate people who may have been injured by certain vaccines. Persons who believe they may have been injured by a vaccine can learn about the program and about filing a claim by calling 1-800-338-2382 or visiting the VCIP website at www.hrsa.gov/vaccinecompensation.

Q: How can I learn more?
- Ask your doctor or nurse practitioner.
- Call your local or state health department.
- Contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) by calling 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)
- Visit the CDC’s meningococcal disease website: www.cdc.gov/meningococcal
- Visit the CDC’s vaccines website: www.cdc.gov/vaccines