

December 23, 2013

Dear Community Members,

We are writing with an update on the efforts to obtain approval to use a serogroup B meningococcal vaccine at UC Santa Barbara. The vaccine for serogroup B is currently licensed for use only in Europe, Australia and Canada.

While we are reassured that no additional cases of meningococcal disease have occurred in community members since November 21, 2013, the nature of the disease and the cases at Princeton University this fall support moving forward with vaccination. The University has been working with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state and local health officials to expedite access to the vaccine.

Following a CDC site visit to campus earlier this month and a careful review of the historical epidemiology of the disease at our University and in the local community, the CDC with support from our University, Santa Barbara County Public Health Department and the California Department of Public Health, will be moving forward with an Investigational New Drug application (IND) with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Since this vaccine is not licensed in the United States, it is considered "investigational" and requires a special process in order to use it, similar to the one that took place at Princeton University earlier this fall. The IND would allow access to the serogroup B meningococcal vaccine for those identified by medical and health officials as being at increased risk.

The University would offer the vaccinations to community members identified by the IND as being at increased risk. Although the process is continuing to move ahead as rapidly as possible, there are still many steps that need to take place, including determining the population to receive the vaccine.

The CDC has posted a Q&A on their web site about the current situation at UC Santa Barbara and has a designated email for serogroup B vaccine questions.

The health and well-being of our students and campus community is our highest priority. We will continue to send out timely notices and post updates and additional information on our Student Health site as more specific information becomes available.

We hope you have a safe and restful break and look forward to the start of the new quarter.

Sincerely,

Henry T. Yang  
Chancellor  
UC Santa Barbara

Mary Ferris, MD  
Student Health Executive Director  
UC Santa Barbara