



MENINGITIS CANADA CALLS ON GOVERNMENTS TO FUND MENINGITIS B VACCINE

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In the wake of the tragic death of 19-year-old Kai Matthews of Halifax, Nova Scotia, Meningitis Foundation Canada (MFC) calls on all Canadian provinces and territories to include meningitis B on their routine immunization schedules.

“It is unconscionable and unacceptable that a vaccine to prevent the most common and deadly form of meningitis is not fully funded and included on all provincial and territorial routine immunization schedules. Kai Matthew’s heartbreaking death might have been prevented had he received either of the two available Health Canada-approved vaccines for the B strain that killed him”, said MFC spokesperson and Co-Chair Michael Redfearn.

Kai was a healthy, vibrant multi-sport athlete who had just finished his first year at Acadia University. Despite being approved, many young Canadians and their families are not aware of the meningitis B vaccines and therefore have not been immunized. If the COVID-19 pandemic has taught us anything, it has driven home the cold hard fact that vaccine prevention saves lives.

Students who are in close contact through living in college or university dorms or sharing beverages or utensils or through kissing and engaging in other behaviors are at greater risk of contracting meningitis. A blood infection with *Neisseria meningitidis*, the bacteria that causes meningococemia and meningococcal meningitis, may not be recognized or diagnosed when an infected person starts to feel unwell. For this reason, vaccine prevention is the most important way to reduce serious illness.

Meningitis is a potentially deadly inflammation of the brain and spinal cord, which result from infection by bacteria, viruses, and fungi. Bacterial meningitis is the most severe type and is a medical emergency. It can strike quickly, be difficult to diagnose, and can lead to death in a matter of hours. There are effective vaccines now available to protect against many of the bacteria that cause meningitis and septicemia.

BforKai.com exists to help educate people about meningitis B and increase vaccination rates.

For more information on meningitis and how to protect against this deadly disease, visit www.meningitis.ca or Join Us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

Contact Data

Primary Contact: Kathryn Blain, Executive Director
fund@meningitis.ca

or

Michael Redfearn, Co-Chair
mredfearn@meningitis.ca