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**Campus Health Services**

Medical Services

PO Box 6033

824 S. San Francisco St.

Flagstaff, AZ 86011-4101

928-523-2131

928-523-1102 fax

[www.nau.edu/campushealth](http://www.nau.edu/campushealth)

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Dear NAU Students and Parents:

On behalf of Campus Health Services, I would like to share information with you about bacterial meningococcal disease and an immunization recommendation that is important for you to know as college approaches.

Bacterial meningococcal disease, commonly referred to as bacterial meningococcal meningitis, is a serious infection that has recently gained much media exposure because of its potential impact on college campuses. Although not very common, it can cause debilitating and permanent disabilities and in some cases, death. Some forms of bacterial meningitis are very contagious and can progress very rapidly, making timely treatment difficult. People living in close proximity to each other, such as in residence halls, dormitories, or sorority and fraternity houses are especially at risk.

Two types of vaccines are available that can prevent certain types of bacterial meningococcal meningitis. A conjugate vaccine is available that provides protection from four of the five strains of bacteria that most commonly cause illness – A, C, W, and Y. This vaccine is administered in two doses and commonly offered as part of routine childhood immunization plans and your child may have already received it. A second vaccine, also administered in two doses, is now available for Meningitis strain B.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and the American College Health Association (ACHA) recommend that all first-year college students living in residence halls to be immunized against bacterial meningococcal disease. Both ACIP and ACHA further recommend that any college student under 25 years of age wishing to protect themselves from meningococcal meningitis get vaccinated. While we do not *require* either vaccine, ***Campus Health Services supports these recommendations and strongly recommends that all students who plan to live on campus get both these vaccines.***

Please obtain a copy of the student's immunization records to determine which, if any, of these vaccines may have already been received. You may contact your personal healthcare provider if you would like these vaccines administered prior to coming to campus or we can give them at Campus Health Services once you have arrived.

Student health is important to us – healthy students do better in school and have more successful college experiences. If you would like more information, please feel free to contact us or click on our meningitis FAQ link, call your personal healthcare provider, or visit the CDC website, [www.cdc.gov/meningitis/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/meningitis/index.html).

Sincerely,

Sandra Smith, M.D.

Medical Director, NAU Campus Health Services