

# ***Welcome to UL Lafayette***

## **Student Health Services**

The staff at the Student Health Service (SHS) wishes your freshman a warm welcome to the UL Lafayette campus and has enclosed a SHS flyer describing our services.

SHS is committed to the prevention of meningococcal meningitis which is a life threatening disease caused by a bacterium called *N. meningitis*. The state of Louisiana requires that all first-time college and university students must be informed about meningococcal disease in order to register for courses.

See the attached Vaccine Information Statements (VIS) flyer discussing:

- ◆ What is meningococcal disease?
- ◆ How is the disease spread?
- ◆ Why is it so dangerous?
- ◆ Who is at risk?
- ◆ Can meningococcal disease be prevented?

There is an increase susceptibility of this illness in:

- ◆ Adolescents and young adults
- ◆ Those who live in close proximity to others
- ◆ Certain life styles that:
  - decrease your immune system ability to protect you
    - active and passive smoking
    - alcoholic consumption and bar patronage
  - increase your exposure to the bacteria through exchange of saliva
    - kissing
    - shared cigarettes of any kind
    - shared drinking glasses, water bottles, eating utensils

***Remember: Do not put anything in your mouth that was in someone else's mouth!!***

Because of this data, the U.S. Center for Disease Control (CDC), and the American College Health Association (ACHA) recommend that students in this group be informed:

- ◆ of these risks of contracting the disease, and
- ◆ the potential benefit of vaccination. (See attached Vaccine Information Statements (VIS) flyer).

Vaccine availability:

- ◆ Students through age 18 years may contact their local parish health unit for information on vaccine availability and eligibility.
- ◆ 19 years and older wishing to reduce their risk may obtain this vaccination from other vendors.