



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION

March 26, 2007

CONTACT: Leslie Ridgeway (619) 685-2239

MEDIA ADVISORY

COUNTY ENCOURAGES AWARENESS OF MENINGOCOCCAL DISEASE

Following Death of North County Student, Parents Urged to Get Children Vaccinated

WHO: Michele Ginsberg, M.D., Chief, Community Epidemiology

WHAT: **PRESS AVAILABILITY** to discuss meningococcal disease as related to death of 15-year-old North County student over the weekend.

WHEN: **1:30 – 2:30 p.m.**
Monday, March 26, 2007

WHERE: Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA)
County of San Diego
1700 Pacific Highway

WHY: The death of a 15-year-old Canyon Crest Academy student of Meningococcal disease is a cause for concern. The risk of infection is extraordinarily low but parents are urged to seek vaccination for their children.

Those in close contact with the student have been notified and advised to seek preventive antibiotic treatment. Close contact is defined as living in the same household or sharing oral secretions, such as by kissing or sharing food, drinks, water bottles, cigarettes, lipstick, etc.

Parents also have been advised to be on alert for symptoms which include: fever, headache, stiff neck and/or rash that does not blanch on pressure.

To reduce the spread of meningococcal disease and other communicable diseases, HHSA recommends not sharing food, drinks, water bottles, lipstick or lip balm, etc. A vaccine is available to prevent some strains of meningococcal disease. For more information on the disease and the vaccine, contact your healthcare provider or go to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website:

http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/submenus/sub_meningitis.htm

For information about free and low-cost vaccine, go to www.sdiz.org.

###