February 2010

Dear Parent:

I am writing to inform you about meningococcal disease, a potentially fatal bacterial infection commonly referred to as meningococcal meningitis, and a relatively new law in New York State. On July 22, 2003, Governor Pataki signed New York State Public Health Law (NYS PHL) §2167 requiring overnight children's camps to distribute information about meningococcal disease and vaccination to all campers who attend camp for 7 or more consecutive nights. This law became effective on August 15, 2003.

Camps Baco & Che-Na-Wah is required to maintain a record of the following for each student:

- A response to receipt of meningococcal disease and vaccine information signed by the camper's parent or guardian; AND
- Information on the availability and cost of the new meningococcal meningitis vaccine (Menactra™); AND EITHER
- A record of meningococcal meningitis immunization within the past 10 years; OR
- An acknowledgement of meningococcal disease risks and refusal of meningococcal meningitis immunization signed by the camper's parent or guardian.

Meningococcal meningitis is rare. However, when it strikes, its flu-like symptoms make diagnosis difficult. If not treated early, meningococcal meningitis can lead to swelling of the fluid surrounding the brain and spinal column as well as severe and permanent disabilities, such as hearing loss, brain damage, seizures, limb amputation and even death.

Cases of meningococcal disease among teens and young adults 15 to 24 years of age have more than doubled since 1991. The disease strikes about 2,500 Americans each year and claims about 300 lives.

In February 2005, the CDC recommended a new vaccine, known as Menactra™, for use to prevent meningococcal disease. The previous version of this vaccine, Menomune™, was first available in the United States in 1985. Both vaccines are 85% to 100% effective in preventing the 4 kinds of the meningococcus germ (types A, C, Y, W-135). These 4 types cause about 70% of the disease in the United States. Because the vaccine does not include type B, which accounts for about one-third of cases in adolescents, it does not prevent all cases of meningococcal disease.

Information about the availability and cost of the vaccine can be obtained from your health care provider and by visiting the manufacturer's website at www.meningitisvaccine.com. Camps Baco & Che-Na-Wah do not offer meningococcal immunization services.

We encourage you to carefully review the enclosed materials. **Please complete the Meningococcal Vaccination Response Form and return it** (before June 1st) **to:**
Camps Baco & Che-Na-Wah
484 S Wood Road
Rockville Centre, NY 11570

To learn more about meningitis and the vaccine, please feel free to contact Bob Wortman (516-867-3895) and/or consult your child's physician. You can also find information about the disease at the New York State Department of Health website: WWW.HEALTH.STATE.NY.US, and the website of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): WWW.CDC.GOV/NCIDOD/DBMD/DISEASEINFO.

Sincerely,
The Wortmans
Camps Baco & Che-Na-Wah

Winter address 484 South Wood Rd; Rockville Centre NY 11570 Tel 516 867 3895 Fax: 516 868 3819
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