The State University of New York is writing to inform you about meningococcal disease, a potentially fatal bacterial infection commonly referred to as meningococcal meningitis. New York State Public Health Law (NYS PHL) §2167 requires overnight children’s camps to distribute information about meningococcal disease and vaccination to all campers who attend camp for seven or more consecutive nights.

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
- Severe and permanent disabilities, including:
  - Hearing loss
  - Brain Damage
  - Limb Amputation
  - Seizures
  - Death

Did you know?

- Cases among teens & young adults (ages 15-24) have more than doubled since 1991
- The disease strikes about 2500 Americans each year and claims about 300 lives annually
- A version of the meningococcal vaccine called Menomune™ was first available in the U.S. in 1985
- In February 2005 the CDC recommended a vaccine known as Menactra™ for use to prevent meningococcal disease

Both meningococcal vaccines are 85% to 100% effective in preventing types A, C, Y, and W-135 meningococcus germs. Types A, C, Y, and W-135 cause roughly 70% of meningococcal disease in the United States.

Because vaccination does not include type B, which accounts for about 1/3 of cases of meningococcal disease in adolescents, it does not prevent all cases of the disease.

Crane Youth Music (CYM) is required to maintain a record of the following for each camper:

- A response to receipt of meningococcal disease and vaccination 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/guardian.

For information about the availability and cost of the vaccine, please consult your child’s physician or visit the manufacturer’s website at www.menactra.com

You can find information about the disease at the NY State DOH website at www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/ meningococcal/fact_sheet.htm

Or on the website of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at www.cdc.gov/meningitis/index.html