

Get the Facts on HPV!

Human Papilloma Virus, also known as HPV, is a common infection that can lead to cancer.

Almost everyone will get HPV at some point in their lives. People get HPV from intimate contact with someone who has the virus. Most people infected with HPV have no symptoms. This means they can spread it to others without knowing it. The infection will clear up in many people, but in some it lingers on and causes cancer later on.

There are many different strains of the virus— some cause cancer, some cause warts. In girls, HPV can cause cancer or warts of the cervix, the vagina, the outside of the vagina, the anus, or the throat. In boys, HPV can cause cancer or warts of the penis, anus, or the throat.

There a vaccine to prevent HPV!

The vaccine is a simple shot, given three times in a series over six months at 1, 3 and 6 months apart. The vaccine works very well at preventing infection with the HPV types that cause 90% of the cases of warts and cancer of the throat, cervix and rectum. The main goal of the series of shots is to prevent cancer. The shot works best if you get it at age 11, as the body reacts to the vaccine stronger at a young age.

Who should get the vaccine?

The vaccine is recommended in girls age 11-26 and in boys from age 11 to 21. For men who have sex with men, the vaccine can be given until age 27. Parents with younger children often question why their child should get the vaccine if they are not sexually active. The answer is that all vaccines should be given before exposure. Also, the younger you are when you are vaccinated, the better your body reacts to the vaccine in fighting off the virus if you ever come in contact with it. The HPV vaccine series can be started as early as age 9 years.

Be a
SUPERHERO

*HPV vaccine
prevents cancer.
Protect your kids,
get the shot!*



Illustrations by Abby Hellstrom

Is the vaccine safe?

YES! HPV vaccine is very safe. Studies for many years in thousands of people around the world have found no serious safety concerns. The most common side effects are pain and redness at the site of the shot. Also, some children might feel faint after getting shots, so to keep them safe, they will need to stay seated for a few minutes afterwards.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

American Academy of Pediatrics

https://www.aap.org/en-us/Documents/hpvtoolkit_RI_Success_Resources_2015_Sept.pdf

National Cancer Institute

www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/infectious-agents/hpv-vaccine-fact-sheet

Immunization Action Coalition

www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4207.pdf

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

www.cdc.gov/hpv/parents/vaccine.html

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