

A Parent's Guide to Preteen and Teen HPV Vaccination

Human Papillomavirus (HPV)

Why Vaccinate Against HPV at 11-12 Years of Age?

- 1 The vaccine produces better immunity to fight infection when given at younger ages compared with older ages.
- 2 HPV vaccination is much more effective at preventing disease and cancer if all three doses are given before someone has their first sexual contact.
- 3 Most American men and women who become sexually active at some time will contract at least one type of HPV in their lifetime.
- 4 HPV is easily spread by skin-to-skin contact during sexual activity. Even if someone does not have sexual intercourse they could still get HPV.
- 5 People who choose to have only one lifetime sex partner can still get HPV if their partner has had previous partners who were infected.
- 6 HPV vaccines have been tested in thousands of people around the world and have shown to have no serious side effects.
- 7 HPV vaccines provide close to 100% protection against pre-cancers; two vaccines protect against genital warts.



What is HPV?

HPV is a common family of viruses that causes infection on the skin or mucous membranes of various areas of the body. There are over 100 different types of HPV. Different types of HPV infection affect different areas of the body. For instance, some types of HPV cause warts in the genital area and other types can lead to abnormal cells on the cervix, vulva, anus, penis, mouth and throat, sometimes leading to cancer.

How Common is HPV?

HPV is incredibly common! According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), nearly all sexually active men and women will get at least one type of HPV in their lifetime. Approximately 79 million Americans are currently infected with HPV, and about 14 million more become newly infected each year. As a result, HPV is considered the most common sexually-transmitted disease in the United States.

How Serious is HPV?

HPV is very serious! Every year, there are about 17,500 women and 9,300 men affected by cancers caused by HPV. HPV is the main cause of almost all cervical cancers in women. There are around 12,000 new cervical cancer cases and 4,000 cervical cancer deaths each year in the U.S.

How is HPV Spread?

The most common ways to get an HPV infection is from vaginal or anal sex with an infected person; however, this is NOT the only way to get HPV. Infection can also be acquired from oral sex and any skin-to-skin contact with areas infected by HPV. In a recent study, 46% of female participants contracted HPV before ever having vaginal sex. It is possible to have HPV and not know it, so one could unknowingly spread HPV to another person. You cannot get HPV from toilet seats, hugging or holding hands, swimming in pools or hot tubs, sharing food or utensils, or being unclean.



“Most people who become infected with HPV do not even know it.”

For More Information...

Contact your health care provider or county health department

Michigan Department of Health & Human Services
www.michigan.gov/immunize

Michigan Department of Health & Human Services
www.michigan.gov/teenvaccines

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention
www.cdc.gov/vaccines

Vaccine Education Center
www.chop.edu/vaccine

Vaccines for Children Program
<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/vfc/index.html>

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CDC. HPV Vaccine- Questions and Answers. <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/hpv/vac-faqs.htm>. Updated 8/6/14. Accessed 3/30/15.

CDC. Cervical Cancer Statistics. <http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/cervical/statistics/>. Updated 9/2/14. Accessed 3/30/15.

American Cancer Society. HPV and Cancer. http://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancercauses/other_carcinogens/infectiousagents/hpv/hpv-and-cancer-info. Updated 2/2/15. Accessed 4/6/15.

Shew, ML, et al. High frequency of human papillomavirus detection in the vagina before first vaginal intercourse among females enrolled in a longitudinal cohort study. *J Infect Dis*. 2013 Mar 15;207(6):1012-5.

Can HPV Infection Be Treated?

There is no treatment for HPV infection. The only treatments available are for the health problems that HPV can cause such as genital warts, cervical changes, and cancer. In some cases, the body fights off the virus naturally. In the cases where the virus cannot be fought off naturally, the body is at risk for serious complications such as cancer. It is not known why HPV goes away in most, but not all cases. There is no way to know which people will go on to develop cancer or other health problems.

What is the HPV Vaccine?

In the U.S., nearly 75% of invasive HPV-related cancers are caused by the HPV types found in the vaccine. HPV vaccines are licensed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and recommended by the CDC. HPV vaccines are given in three shots over six months. It is important to get all three doses to get the best protection.

When Should My Child Get The HPV Vaccine?

Routine vaccination with three doses of HPV vaccine is recommended for all 11 and 12 year old boys and girls. The vaccines can be given as early as 9 years of age. Catch-up ages for girls are from 13-26 years and 13-21 years for boys. If your son or daughter did not receive the vaccine at the recommended ages, they may still be eligible for doses.

For the HPV vaccine to work best, it is very important for preteens to get all three doses before any sexual activity begins. It is possible to get infected with HPV the first time sexual contact with another person occurs, even if they do not have intercourse. Also, the vaccine produces better immunity to fight infection when given to pre-teens than it does in older teens and young adults.

Are the Vaccines Safe and Effective?

The vaccines have been shown to be highly effective in protecting against the HPV types that cause cancers. A study published in *The Journal of Infectious Diseases* showed that, since the vaccine was introduced in 2006, cases of HPV decreased 56 percent among female teenagers 14-19 years of age who had received the vaccine.

All vaccines used in the U.S. are required to go through years of extensive safety testing before they are licensed by the FDA. The vaccines are continually monitored for their safety and effectiveness through three monitoring systems. These systems can monitor adverse events already known to be caused by a vaccine as well as detect rare events.

Over 76 million doses of HPV vaccine have been distributed in the U.S since 2006. Since its recommendation for routine use in the U.S. in 2007, no serious safety concerns have been identified. Common, mild side effects include pain where the shot was given, fever, headache, and nausea.

Talk to your healthcare provider today about protecting your child against HPV infection!