



# HPV Vaccination: *A Parent's Guide*

## Fast Facts:

HPV is so common that nearly all men and women will get at least one type at some point in their lives.

Most people never know that they have HPV and may give it to a partner without knowing.



HPV vaccine works very well! It provides close to 100 percent protection against pre-cancers and genital warts.

The vaccine works better when given at a younger age; that is because the body's immune response is greater.

**11-12  
years**



For the best protection, the HPV series should be given before contact with HPV. There is no reason to wait to vaccinate until teens reach puberty or start having sex.

HPV vaccines went through years of testing, in thousands of people around the world. No serious safety concerns were found.



HPV causes many different types of cancer. HPV vaccine offers long-lasting protection now to prevent those serious cancers later.

## What is HPV?

Human papillomavirus or HPV is a common family of viruses that cause infection in the body. There are over 150 different types of HPV. Some types of HPV cause genital warts while others lead to cancer. Cancers caused by HPV are: cervix, vulva, vagina, penis, or anus cancers, and cancer in the back of the throat, including the base of the tongue and tonsils.

## How common is HPV?

HPV is very common! Nearly all men and women will get at least one type of HPV in their lifetime. About 79 million Americans are currently infected with HPV, and about 14 million more become newly infected each year. HPV is the most common sexually-transmitted disease in the United States.

## How serious is HPV?

Most people with HPV never develop symptoms or health problems and the infection goes away on its own within two years. For people who don't clear the infection, HPV can be very serious. There is no way to know which people who have HPV will get cancer or other health problems.

Every year in the United States, over 27,000 people get cancer caused by HPV. That's one person every 20 minutes of every day, all year long! HPV is the main cause of almost all cervical cancers in women.

## How is HPV spread?

HPV is passed from one person to another during skin-to-skin sexual contact, including oral sex. In a recent study, 46 percent of females got HPV before ever having vaginal intercourse. You cannot get HPV from toilet seats, hugging or holding hands, swimming in pools or hot tubs, or sharing food or utensils. Anyone who is sexually active can get HPV, even if they have had sex with only one person.

## Can HPV infection be treated?

There is no treatment for the virus itself. There are treatments for the health problems HPV can cause, such as genital warts, cervical changes, and other cancers. The best way to avoid HPV is to get vaccinated.

See reverse





## What is the HPV vaccine?

HPV vaccines are licensed by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The HPV vaccine is made from one protein from the HPV virus that cannot cause infection and does not cause cancer.

## When should my child get the HPV vaccine?

HPV vaccination is recommended for preteen girls and boys at age 11 or 12 years. Teens and young adults who didn't start or finish the HPV vaccine series also need HPV vaccination. HPV vaccines are given in a series of shots over several months. Depending on when your child started the series, he or she may only need two doses to be fully protected.

## Is the HPV vaccine safe?

Yes. HPV vaccines have been studied very carefully and continue to be monitored by the CDC and FDA. No serious safety concerns have been linked to HPV vaccination. Studies continue to show that HPV vaccines are safe. Common, mild side effects include pain and redness in the area of the arm where the shot was given, fever, dizziness, and nausea.

## Does it work?

Yes. HPV vaccines work extremely well. Since the first HPV vaccine was recommended in 2006, there has been a 64 percent reduction in vaccine-type HPV infections among teen girls in the United States. Research has also shown that fewer teens are getting genital warts since the HPV vaccines have been in use. Protection provided by HPV vaccine is long-lasting. Currently, it is known that HPV vaccine works in the body for at least 10 years without becoming less effective. Data suggest that the protection provided by the vaccine will continue beyond 10 years.

# DON'T DELAY

Talk to your health care provider today about protecting your child from cancers caused by HPV.

### Resources

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

[www.michigan.gov/immunize](http://www.michigan.gov/immunize)

[www.michigan.gov/teenvaccines](http://www.michigan.gov/teenvaccines)

[www.michigan.gov/vfc](http://www.michigan.gov/vfc)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[www.cdc.gov/vaccines](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines)

[www.cdc.gov/hpv](http://www.cdc.gov/hpv)

Vaccine Education Center

[www.chop.edu/vaccine](http://www.chop.edu/vaccine)

### References

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### Credits

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