

## Is the HPV vaccine safe?



The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has licensed the vaccine as safe and effective. The vaccine has been tested on thousands of females and no serious side effects have been

shown. The most common side effect is soreness at the injection site.

## How is the HPV vaccine given?

The vaccine is given in three doses over 6 months.

- 1st dose: Now—or at a date you and your healthcare provider choose
- 2nd dose: 2 months after 1st dose
- 3rd dose: 6 months after 1st dose



The HPV vaccine can be given at the same time as other vaccines.

## What is the cost of the HPV vaccine?

The vaccine may cost \$120 per dose (\$360 for the full series). However, cost may vary.

Most insurance plans and managed care plans cover the cost of recommended vaccines. However, while some insurance companies cover the cost, some may not. Check with your insurance provider to be certain the HPV vaccine is covered.

## How can my family get the vaccine if we don't have insurance and cannot afford it?

The Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program is a national program that helps families of children who may not otherwise have access to vaccines by providing free vaccines to doctors who serve them. New Jersey has VFC providers and Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) that offer free or low cost vaccines for children without health coverage for vaccines. For more information, call the NJDHSS Vaccines for Children Program at (609) 588-7512.



## Where can I get more information?

- Your healthcare provider
- NJDHSS website: [www.nj.gov/health](http://www.nj.gov/health)
- CDC HPV Vaccination Information: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/hpv/](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/hpv/)
- CDC-INFO Contact Center (English and Spanish): 1-800-CDC-INFO
- NJ Vaccines for Children Program: 609-588-7512



This information is intended for educational purposes only and is not intended to replace consultation with a health care professional. 10/07

# HPV Cervical Cancer



Questions and Answers  
about Risk and Prevention  
for Girls and Women

## What is HPV?

HPV (human papillomavirus) is a common virus that is passed from person to person through oral sex, anal sex or penile-vaginal sex. There are about 40 different types of HPV. HPV is the major cause of cervical cancer in women.



## What are the symptoms of HPV?

Most people do not show any symptoms of HPV. Some types of HPV can cause warts in the genital or anal areas.

## How common is HPV?



HPV is the most common sexually transmitted infection in the United States. At least half of sexually active people will get HPV some time in their lives. Every year in the U.S., about 6.2 million people get HPV. HPV is most common in people in their late teens and early 20s.

## Is there a cure for HPV?

There is no "cure" for HPV infection, although in most women the infection goes away on its own. However, treatments are available for warts and pre-cancerous changes in the cervix.

## What is the connection between HPV and cervical cancer?

Ongoing HPV infection with one of the "high risk" types of the virus is the main risk factor for cervical cancer.

## How common is cervical cancer?



The American Cancer Society estimates that in 2007 over 11,000 women will be diagnosed with cervical cancer and approximately 3,600 women will die from this disease.

## How can I prevent HPV and cervical cancer?

There are things you can do to protect yourself from HPV and cervical cancer:

- Get vaccinated for HPV.
- Use condoms or other latex barriers for oral, anal, and penile-vaginal sex to reduce the risk of getting or passing HPV.
- Get regular pap tests to detect HPV lesions and treat them before they become cancerous.



## What is the HPV vaccine?

The HPV vaccine is the first vaccine developed and licensed to prevent cervical cancer, genital warts, and other diseases caused by HPV.



## How effective is the HPV vaccine?

This vaccine is effective in preventing four types of HPV that cause up to 70% of all cervical cancers and about 90% of genital warts. However, the vaccine will not treat existing HPV infections or complications.

## Who should get the HPV vaccine?

Both the Advisory Council on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and recommend the HPV vaccine for all 11-12 year old girls, though vaccination can begin at age nine. The vaccine is also recommended for 13-26 year old girls/women who have not yet received or completed the full series of shots.



**HPV and cervical cancer are preventable. Learn the facts. Protect yourself.**