

HUMAN PAPILLOMAVIRUS VACCINE

Use the speaking points on this page and share the accompanying infographics with families.

About human papillomavirus

- HPV stands for human papillomavirus.
- HPV can cause genital warts and several types of cancers that affect the
 - » Back of the throat, base of the tongue, and tonsils
 - » Anus
 - » Cervix, vulva, and vagina
 - » Penis

All of these cancers can be deadly.
- HPV is spread by intimate skin-to-skin contact or by having vaginal, anal, or oral sex with someone who has the virus, even if they don't have signs or symptoms. It only takes one encounter or one partner to transmit the infection.
- Exposure to this virus is very common.
 - » Experts estimate that almost all sexually active people will acquire HPV at some point in their lives.
 - » Of new HPV cases, 3 out of 4 are found in people at ages 15 to 24 years.
 - » About 13 million people in the United States, including teens, become infected each year.
- In most people, the virus goes away on its own, but if it lasts it can lead to cancer and other diseases.
- Each year more than 46,000 people are diagnosed with HPV related cancers.
- There is no medicine to cure an HPV infection.

Why vaccinate against HPV?

- Getting HPV vaccine can prevent your preteen or teen from getting many of the strains of HPV that cause cancers. The vaccine that is currently available also prevents genital warts.
- This vaccine works and is long-lasting.

HPV vaccine

- The AAP recommends starting the series between 9 and 12 years. HPV vaccination is recommended for all individuals through age 26 years who are not adequately vaccinated. Some adults 27 through 45 years old also may be eligible for the HPV vaccine.

Why is HPV given at ages 9 to 12?

- To work, HPV vaccine must be given before a person is exposed.
- Every visit after the age of 9 is an opportunity to provide the vaccine to preteens and teens. Almost no 9- to 12-year-olds have HPV infection.
- After receiving human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine, preteens make more infection-fighting antibodies than teens. That is why only 2 doses of the vaccine, instead of 3, are recommended at ages 9 to 12.
- Early vaccination prevents substantially more cases of precancer (abnormal cells that lead to cancer) than late vaccination.
- Current evidence shows that protection from HPV vaccination does not wear off!

The dosing schedule is as follows:

- All recommended doses of the HPV vaccine are needed for the body to build up enough immunity to protect against infection. This is also true of many of the vaccines that babies get.

Schedule	Recommended For	Dose	Routine Timing of Dose	Minimum Intervals
2-dose	Persons beginning human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination before their 15th birthday	1st	Today	Minimum interval between the first and second dose is 5 months
		2nd	6–12 mo after first dose	
3-dose	Persons beginning HPV vaccination at age ≥ 15 and those who are immunocompromised	1st	Today	The following minimum intervals should be maintained: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Between doses 1 and 2: 4 wk• Between doses 2 and 3: 12 wk• Between doses 1 and 3: 5 mo
		2nd	1–2 mo after first dose	
		3rd	6 mo after first dose	

Common side effects of the HPV vaccine

HPV vaccine is very safe. Since the vaccine was licensed in 2006, no serious safety concerns have been linked to HPV vaccination.

Vaccine side effects

- Mild to moderate side effects
 - » Pain, redness, or swelling where the shot was given
 - » Fever
 - Mild (100°F or 37.8°C)

Severe side effects

- Serious illnesses do not happen more commonly in people who received the vaccine compared with those who did not.

