

# Human Papilloma Vaccine (HPV)

Vaccines are available to prevent the human papillomavirus (HPV) types that cause most cervical cancers as well as some cancers of the anus, vulva (area around the opening of the vagina), vagina, and oropharynx (back of throat including base of tongue and tonsils). The vaccine also prevents HPV types that cause most genital warts.

## Why is the HPV vaccine important?

Genital HPV is a common virus that is passed from one person to another through direct skin-to-skin contact during sexual activity. Most sexually active people will get HPV at some time in their lives, though most will never even know it as they do not show any signs or symptoms. This means that they can transmit (pass on) the virus to others without knowing it. HPV infection is most common in people in their late teens and early 20s. There are about 40 types of HPV that can infect the genital areas of men and women. Most HPV types cause no symptoms and go away on their own. But some types can cause cervical cancer in women and other less common cancers — like cancers of the anus, penis, vagina, and vulva and oropharynx.



## Three HPV vaccines are available: Cervarix®, Gardasil® and Gardasil 9®

Cervarix® protects against HPV16 and HPV18, which means it offers protection against cervical cancer.

Gardasil® protects against HPV16, HPV18 and HPV6 and HPV11, which means that it protects against genital warts as well as cervical cancer.

Gardasil 9® is a vaccine that offers protection against nine different types of HPV.



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## Which girls/women should receive HPV vaccination?

HPV vaccination is recommended for 11 and 12 year-old girls. It is also recommended for girls and women aged 13 through 26 years of age who have not yet been vaccinated or completed the vaccine series; HPV vaccine can be given to girls from age 9 years. Most countries' immunisation guidelines recommend that 11 to 12 year olds get two doses of HPV vaccine to protect against cancers caused by HPV.

In particular, types HPV16 and HPV18, are known to be involved in the development of most cases of cervical cancer (cancer of the neck of the womb). Two other types of HPV (types HPV6 and HPV11) are the cause of most cases of genital warts, a common sexually transmitted infection that can affect both men and women. Genital warts are not life-threatening. But they can cause emotional stress and their treatment can be very uncomfortable.

## How Gardasil is given ?

Gardasil is given as an injection by your doctor. Gardasil is intended for adolescents and adults from 9 years of age onwards.

### If you are from 9 to and including 13 years of age

Gardasil can be administered according to a 2-dose schedule:

- **First injection:** at chosen date
- **Second injection:** 6 months after first injection

If the second vaccine dose is administered earlier than 6 months after the first dose, a third dose should always be administered.

### If you are from 14 years of age

Gardasil should be administered according to a 3-dose schedule:

- **First injection:** at chosen date
- **Second injection:** 2 months after first injection
- **Third injection:** 6 months after first injection

The second dose should be administered at least one month after the first dose and the third dose should be administered at least 3 months after the second dose. All three doses should be given within a 1-year period.



# Can human papillomavirus vaccine cause problems?

Along with their useful effects, vaccines like most medicines can cause unwanted side-effects, although not everyone experiences them. HPV vaccine often causes no problems, but the table below contains some of the side-effects which may occur. You will find a full list in the manufacturer's information leaflet supplied with your medicine. Speak with your doctor or pharmacist if any of the following side-effects continue or become troublesome.

Common human papillomavirus vaccine side-effects	What can I do if I experience this?
Pain, swelling, redness, bruising or itching around the site of the injection	This should soon pass
Headache, aching muscles or joints	If troublesome, take a dose of a suitable painkiller
Feeling tired, raised temperature (mild fever)	This should soon pass
Feeling sick (nausea), diarrhoea, tummy (abdominal) pain	Eat simple meals - avoid rich or spicy meals. Drink plenty of water

If you experience any other symptoms which you think may be due to the vaccine, speak with your doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

It is recommended that individuals who receive a first dose of Gardasil ® complete the vaccination course with Gardasil ®.

Gardasil will be given as an injection through the skin into the muscle (preferably the muscle of the upper arm or thigh).

The vaccine should not be mixed in the same syringe with any other vaccines and solutions.



# FAQs

## How long does vaccine protection last?

Research suggests that vaccine protection is long-lasting. Current studies have followed vaccinated individuals for ten years, and show that there is no evidence of weakened protection over time.

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## What does the vaccine not protect against?

The vaccine does not protect against all HPV types—so they will not prevent all cases of cervical cancer. Since some cervical cancers will not be prevented by the vaccine, it will be important for women to continue getting screened for cervical cancer. Also, the vaccine does not prevent other sexually transmitted infections (STIs). So it will still be important for sexually active persons to lower their risk for other STIs.

2

## What about vaccinating boys and men?

HPV vaccine is licensed for use in boys and men. It has been found to be safe and effective for males 9 -26 years. Some countries recommend routine vaccination of boys aged 11 or 12 years with two doses of HPV vaccine.

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