

Human Papilloma Virus

(Questions and Answers about Risk and Prevention)

Q. What is the connection between HPV and cancer?

A. HPV infection with one of the “high risk” types of the virus is associated with several types of cancer. Each year in the U.S., about 18,000 HPV associated cancers affect women, with cervical cancer being the most common type. About 7,000 HPV associated cancers affect men each year.

Q. What is the connection between HPV and genital warts?

A. Certain types of HPV cause warts in the genital or anal areas. Warts can vary in size, appearance and number.

Q. How can I prevent HPV and its related diseases?

- 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.**
- Girls/women should get regular pap tests to detect HPV lesions and treat them before they become cancerous.**
- Some experts recommend yearly anal pap smears for certain high-risk groups.**

Q. What is the HPV vaccine?

A. There are two HPV vaccines approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Both vaccines (Cervarix and Gardasil) protect against most cervical cancers in females. One vaccine (Gardasil) is also approved to prevent most genital warts and anal cancers in both males and females. Neither vaccine will treat existing HPV infections or complications.

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Q. Who should get the HPV vaccine?

A. Both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services (NJDHSS) recommend routine HPV vaccination for all 11-12 year old girls and boys. The vaccine is also recommended for 13-26 year old girls/women and 13-21 year-old boys and men who have not yet received or completed the full series of shots. The vaccine should also be considered for men 22-26 years of age.

Q. How is the HPV vaccine given?

A. Vaccines are given in three doses over 6 months.
-1st dose: Now – or at a date you and your healthcare provider choose.
-2nd dose: 1 or 2 months after 1st dose.
-3rd dose: 6 months after 1st dose

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

Q. What is the cost of the HPV vaccine?

A. Cost for HPV vaccines can vary. Most insurance plans and managed care plans cover the cost of recommended vaccines. Check with your insurance provider to be certain the HPV vaccine is covered.