

UNDERSTANDING HPV VACCINES

A CRITICAL STEP IN CANCER PREVENTION

Protect Your Child's Health: The Power of the HPV Vaccine

Every parent and caregiver wants to keep their child safe and healthy. Not just for today, but for the future. One of the most effective ways to prevent certain types of cancer is through the **HPV vaccine**.

What is HPV?

HPV stands for human papillomavirus, a common family of viruses. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that most American men and women will contract at least one type of HPV during their lifetime.

Most people with HPV have no symptoms and don't even know they're infected. But in some cases, the virus can linger and lead to cancer years later.

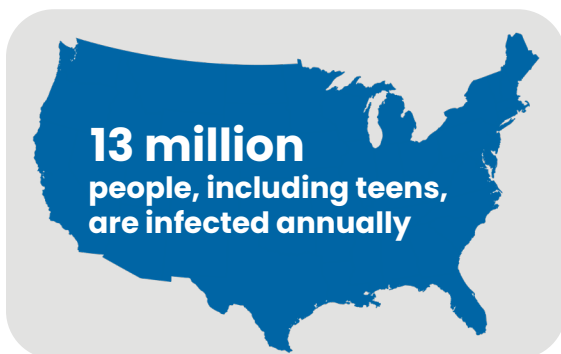


What Cancers Can the HPV Vaccine Prevent?

The HPV vaccine protects against the types of HPV most likely to cause cancer. These include:

- Cervical cancer
- Throat (oropharyngeal) cancer, which is more common in men
- Anal cancer
- Penile cancer
- Vaginal and vulvar cancers

Vaccinating early builds a stronger immune response.



HPV Affects Millions: Here's What You Need to Know

- 13 million people, including teens, are infected each year.
- Persistent HPV can cause cancer, sometimes decades after infection.
- Most people show no signs of infection.
- HPV is the most common sexually transmitted infection in the U.S.

Benefits of the HPV Vaccine

- Prevents up to 90% of HPV-related cancers
- Provides long-lasting protection, which is key because the virus can linger and lead to cancer years after exposure.

Who Should Get the HPV Vaccine?

- All children, boys and girls, as early as age 9
- Teens and young adults (through age 26) who haven't been vaccinated can still benefit

When Should Children Get the HPV Vaccine?

- ✓ **Ages 9 to 12 is the ideal time.** Two doses are needed if the first dose is given before the 13th birthday.
- ✓ **Ages 15 and older** or those with **weakened immune systems**, will need three doses for full protection.
- ✓ **Vaccinations can be administered through the age of 26.** However, it is most effective when given before any exposure to HPV; ideally before a person becomes sexually active.



The ideal vaccination window is ages 9 to 12. Vaccinating early builds a stronger immune response.

What Parents Should Know

- The HPV vaccine is about cancer prevention, not about sex.
- It's just like other routine vaccines that protect against serious diseases.
- Most insurance plans cover it for kids and teens. If cost is a concern, ask your provider about assistance programs.



Talk to Your Provider Today

Don't wait. A simple vaccine today could prevent cancer tomorrow. Ask your child's provider about the HPV vaccine at your next appointment.