

# HPV Vaccine is Cancer Prevention

## Is HPV vaccine recommended for ALL boys and young men?

**HPV vaccine is recommended for all males ages 9 through 21 years of age.** HPV vaccine also may be given to males 22 through 26 years of age. The 3-dose vaccine series is usually started at 11 or 12 years of age but can be started at 9 years of age. HPV immunization is a series of 3 doses of HPV vaccine, given over a 6-month period. If the series is interrupted and you have a long period of time between doses, you do not need any extra doses – just continue the series.



## How common is HPV?

Most sexually active people will get HPV at some point in their lives. **But, most will never know it because HPV infection usually has no signs or symptoms.** The body is usually able to clear the infection on its own, without causing any health problems.

**However, HPV infection can progress to warts or cancer and there is no certainty about who will have these problems from HPV.** Some groups, such as those who are immunosuppressed, men who have sex with men (gay or bisexual), and people with poor oral health are more likely to have problems from HPV infection.

About 4% of males (1 out of every 25 males) in the U.S. report having had genital warts.

## For more information

### The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

[www.cdc.gov/std/hpv/](http://www.cdc.gov/std/hpv/)  
[www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/hpv/vac-faqs.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/hpv/vac-faqs.htm)  
[www.cdc.gov/cancer/hpv/statistics/](http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/hpv/statistics/)

### The Vaccine Education Center at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

[www.chop.edu/service/vaccine-education-center/prevent-hpv/hpv-questions-answers.html](http://www.chop.edu/service/vaccine-education-center/prevent-hpv/hpv-questions-answers.html)  
[www.chop.edu/service/vaccine-education-center/a-look-at-each-vaccine/hpv-vaccine.html](http://www.chop.edu/service/vaccine-education-center/a-look-at-each-vaccine/hpv-vaccine.html)

### The American Academy of Pediatrics

[www2.aap.org/immunization/illnesses/hpv/hpv.html](http://www2.aap.org/immunization/illnesses/hpv/hpv.html)

## Contact us

PA Immunization Education Program  
PA Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics  
Rose Tree Corporate Center  
Building II, Suite 3007  
1400 North Providence Road  
Media, PA 19063-2043

Phone: 484-446-3010  
Email: [iep@paaap.org](mailto:iep@paaap.org)  
Website: [www.paaap.org](http://www.paaap.org)

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The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia



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# Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine for Boys and Young Men



What you need to know...

# Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine for Boys and Young Men

## HPV vaccine for males

- Helps prevent warts in the genital area (penis, testicles, groin, thighs, and area in or around the anus)
- Helps prevent cancers in the genital area and in the throat
- Helps prevent infecting others with HPV

HPV can also infect the throat (oropharyngeal HPV). It can be passed to sexual partners and does not require intercourse to be spread. Any kind of genital contact, including oral sex, can spread HPV. You can pass on HPV even if you do not have a wart or other symptoms.

Of genital warts, 90% are caused by HPV types 6 or 11. The HPV vaccine recommended for males contains HPV types 6 and 11 and so is effective against the most common causes of genital and anal warts.

## HPV-associated cancers in males

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that around **12,100 HPV-associated cancers occur each year among males** in the United States. Oropharyngeal cancers (back of the throat) are the most common HPV-associated cancers among males.



## Which HPV vaccine is recommended for males?

There are two HPV vaccines available in the United States. However, only one of them (Gardasil®) is approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for males. Gardasil® includes the HPV strains (types 6 and 11) that cause anal and genital warts and the strains (types 16 and 18) that cause cancer. HPV vaccine is most effective when all doses are given before sexual contact. The vaccine can be used for males 9 through 26 years of age. Cervarix® brand HPV vaccine is approved only for females and should not be given to males.

## Is HPV vaccine new? Should I wait before getting the vaccine?

### How safe is HPV vaccine for males?

More than **40 million doses** of HPV vaccine have been given in the U.S. since it was first licensed by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in 2006. The vaccine is very safe for both females and males. The most common side effect is soreness in the arm where you get the shot, which is common with many vaccines. Other side effects may include headache or fever. Also, many vaccines (including HPV vaccine) given to teens can cause fainting so your health care provider will likely recommend that teens sit or lie down for vaccine shots and wait in the office for 15 minutes just to be safe.

*HPV is common and often goes unrecognized. The only sure way to not give or get HPV infection and genital warts is to abstain from sexual activity. If you are ever going to be sexually active, get the protection from HPV vaccine now.*

## Does using condoms prevent HPV?

Correct and consistent male condom use might lower the chances of giving or getting genital HPV but such use is not fully protective because HPV can infect areas that are not covered by a condom.

## Can males be tested for HPV?

Tests for HPV are now available to help providers screen females but HPV tests are not approved for screening males.

## How is HPV disease treated?

*There is currently no treatment for the HPV infection itself. Treatments for HPV are directed at the symptoms such as removing warts or treating cancers.*

**Since HPV is sexually transmitted, why immunize at younger ages?** Provide protection now, before the person is sexually active. Some young people may mistakenly think that only intercourse can spread sexually transmitted diseases, or think that condoms protect against all sexually transmitted diseases. Most sexually transmitted diseases can be spread from one person to another by many types of contact including vaginal, anal, and oral contact. And condoms do not guarantee complete protection against pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases including HPV.

In addition, many males and females (especially in their tween and teen years) may not plan ahead. HPV vaccine at least helps to prevent infection with the most common causes of anal and genital warts, and some cancers.

