



Human Papillomavirus (HPV)

What is the HPV Vaccine?

The HPV vaccine is a safe and effective way to keep you or your child from getting very sick from the real disease. It is approved by Health Canada. The HPV vaccine (shot) is made with a tiny amount of dead germs. Vaccines help the immune system learn how to protect itself against the real disease.

Is HPV serious?

Most people do not have any signs or symptoms when they are infected with HPV and can pass it onto other people without knowing it.

HPV can cause genital warts, and various forms of cancer.

For both men and women, HPV can cause:

- Anal cancer,
- Throat cancer, and
- Mouth cancer.

In men, it can also cause:

- Cancer of the penis.

The best way to protect against HPV infection and some forms of cancer is to get a HPV vaccine. All females 9-45 years of age and all males 9-26 years of age should get this vaccine. This vaccine is offered free of charge to everyone between the ages of 9-26 years.

In women can also cause:

- Cancer of the vagina,
- Cancer of the vulva, and
- Cervical cancer.

Many of these cancers can be prevented by vaccination.

How is HPV spread?

HPV is one of the most common sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Three out of four sexually active people will get HPV at some point in their lives.

Anyone who has any kind of sexual contact with another person can get HPV. This includes oral, genital, or anal sex.

The more sexual partners you have, the higher the risk. Men who have sex with men are also at higher risk.



Why should you or your child get the HPV vaccine?

The vaccine protects against 9 types of HPV that cause 92% of cervical cancers, 75% of anal cancers, 57% of penile cancers, 72% of vaginal cancers, 25% of head and neck cancers, and 90% of genital warts.

The vaccine works best if given before becoming sexually active. It will prevent HPV infection, but does not treat it.

Because there are many types of HPV, it is beneficial to get this vaccine even if you've been diagnosed with HPV in the past. It can still prevent you from getting the other types of HPV covered by the vaccine.

All women should continue to get routine pap screening for cervical cancer even though they got the HPV vaccine.

What are possible reactions to the HPV vaccine?

Vaccines, like any medicine, can have side effects. Most people who get the HPV vaccine do not have any reactions.

Possible signs of reactions to the vaccine include:

- Soreness,
- Redness, and
- Swelling where the vaccine was given.

Other signs may include:

- Fever,
- Fatigue,
- Muscle or joint aches, and
- Headache.

These are mild reactions and usually last one to two days.

Who should NOT get the HPV vaccine?

Talk to your health care provider to see if this vaccine is right for you or your child.

Acetaminophen (Tylenol® and Tempra®) can be given for fever or soreness.

Who should get the HPV vaccine?

HPV vaccine is given as a series of either 2 or 3 shots according to the following schedule.

SCHEDULE FOR CHILDREN (17 or under)		
	Age	
Vaccine	9-14 years	15-17 years
HPV	2 doses	3 doses
Timing of doses 0 = first dose	0 and 6 months	0, 2, and 6 months

SCHEDULE FOR ADULTS (18 or over)		
	Age*	
Vaccine	Males: 18-26 years	Females: 18-45 years
HPV	3 doses	3 doses
Timing of doses 0 = first dose	0, 2, and 6 months	0, 2, and 6 months

- * Females 27-45 years of age can purchase and receive this vaccine at their local health center or public health office.
- * HPV vaccine may be administered to males 27 years of age and older at ongoing risk of exposure.

ASA (Aspirin®) should **NEVER** be given to children because it can cause a severe liver and brain disease called Reye's Syndrome.

To find out more about the HPV vaccine contact your local health center to speak to your public health nurse or visit the following links:

- NWT Immunization Schedule: <http://www.hss.gov.nt.ca>
- Immunize Canada: <https://immunize.ca>
- To keep track of your family's immunizations on your smart phone or tablet and to receive vaccine schedule reminders please download the CANImmunize App at: <https://www.canimmunize.ca>

Your local health care centre is located at the address below.

It is important to stay in the clinic for 15 minutes after getting any vaccine because there is a rare possibility of a severe allergic reaction. This can include: hives, difficulty breathing, or swelling of the throat, tongue or lips.

If this happens after you leave the clinic, call or go to the nearest Emergency Department or your local health centre for immediate treatment.

Report any serious or unexpected side-effects to your public health nurse.

Place Health Centre
contact information
here.