

HPV Vaccine Q & A

Who should get the vaccine?

The FDA has approved the vaccine, Gardasil, by Merck, for girls and women ages 9 to 26. The CDC recommends the vaccine be given routinely to girls 11 or 12 years old. The recommendation of ages 11-12 was made in part because children that age routinely receive 2 other vaccines at that time and can receive all the vaccines at the same visit.

How effective is the new vaccine?

Studies have shown the vaccine to be nearly 100% effective in protecting against Types 16,18, 6 and 11 for at least 4 years after vaccination.

How much does it cost and how is it given?

The vaccine is given in a series of 3 shots given over 6 months. The price is about \$120 for each dose, for a total of about \$360. Some insurance carriers will pay for the vaccine. The federal Vaccines for Children Program (VCP) will cover the cost of the vaccine to those under age 19 that qualify. For more information on the Vaccine for Children Program is available on the CDC web site, www.cdc.gov.

What if I have already been exposed to HPV, should I still get the vaccine?

Yes! You should consider the vaccine. It is unlikely that you would have all 4 types of HPV that the vaccine protects against. The 4 types that have been linked to most cervical cancer and genital warts.

Are there any reasons to not get the vaccine?

Yes, the vaccine is not recommended during pregnancy or anyone that is allergic to yeast or any vaccine ingredient.

Contact your health care provider to see if the HPV vaccine is right for you!

For more information on HPV and cervical cancer check out these resources:

American Cancer Society
Internet address:www.cancer.org

American Social Health Association
National HPV & Cervical Cancer Resource Center
Internet address: www.ashastd.org
Specific Internet address:
www.ashastd.org/hpvccrc/

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
Internet address: www.cdc.gov
Specific Internet address:
<http://www.cdc.gov/std/HPV/STDFact-HPV.htm>

National Cancer Institute
Internet address: www.cancer.gov
Specific Internet address:
<http://www.cancer.gov/cancerinfo/types/cervical/>

National HPV and Cervical Cancer Public Education Campaign
Internet address: www.cervicalcancercampaign.org

Women's Cancer Network
Internet address: www.wcn.org

Local Resources:

Planned Parenthood of New London
45 Franklin Street
New London, CT 06320
860.443.5820



LEDGE LIGHT HEALTH DISTRICT

943 North Road
P.O. Box 909, Groton, CT 06340
Phone: 860-448-4882 Fax: 860-448-4885
Website:www.ledgelighthd.org

HPV

Human Papillomavirus



Know the Facts!

The Center for Disease Control estimates that

20 million people in the U.S. are currently infected with HPV.

More than 6 million are infected each year.

Of those, about half are between the ages of 15 and 24

The American Cancer Society

estimates that at least **75%**
of women will have HPV at some
point, but very few will develop
cervical cancer

What is HPV?

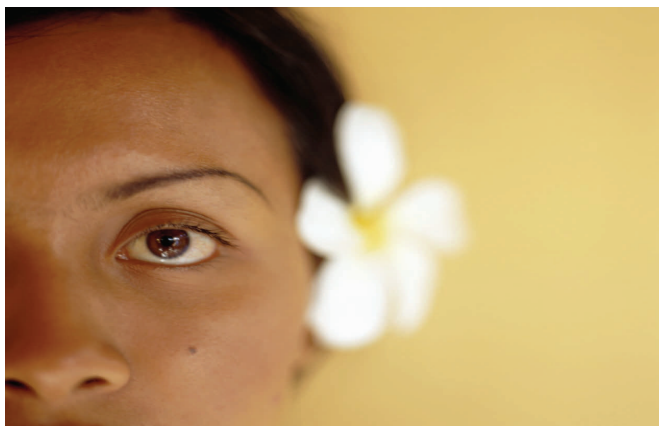
- HPV (human papillomavirus) is a VERY common virus.
- There are more than 100 different types of HPV, but only about 30 types affect the genital area of both men and women.
- Genital HPV is the most common sexually transmitted disease in the U.S., and most sexually active people will have genital HPV at some time in their lives.
- Genital HPV types are divided into two groups, low-risk and high-risk depending on the type's association with cervical cancer. Low-risk types, like HPV-6 and HPV-11, are associated with 90% of all genital warts. High-risk types, like HPV-16 and HPV-18 are linked to 70% of cervical cancer.
- It is difficult to identify which partner may have infected a woman, since a person can have genital HPV for many years before it is detected.
- HPV is passed from person to person through skin to skin genital contact, not through the exchange of body fluids.
- Women with female partners can pass HPV as well as other STD's to each other.
- Men have no symptoms of high-risk HPV infection, but unknowingly pass it on to other partners.

Approximately **90%** of ALL
genital HPV infections, whether caused
by low-risk or high-risk types, are
harmless, have no symptoms, and in
women with a healthy immune
system will go away without any
treatment in a year or two.

Source: www.cdc.gov

Experts recommend...

- Cervical cancer screening, (Pap test), should begin approximately three years after a woman begins having sexual intercourse, but no later than at 21 years old.
- Women under age 30 should be screened every year with a regular Pap test or every 2 years using the newer liquid-based Pap test.
- Women 30 or over that have had 3 normal Pap test results in a row may be screened with a Pap test alone every 2 to 3 years OR a Pap test and HPV DNA test every 3 years.
- Women 65 to 70 years of age who have had at least 3 normal Pap tests, no abnormal Pap tests in the last 10 years and no new sexual partner, may decide, upon consultation with their healthcare provider, to stop cervical cancer screening.
- Women who have had a total hysterectomy (removal of the uterus and cervix) do not need to undergo cervical cancer screening, unless the surgery was done as a treatment for cervical pre-cancer or cancer. She may, however choose to be tested for HPV DNA if she has a new partner.
- A woman at any age with a new sexual partner should resume Pap tests or HPV DNA testing even if she's had a hysterectomy.
- Because HPV also causes some types of vulvar cancer, a woman should have a vulvar exam yearly, even if she does not have a Pap test. The older a women gets, the higher at risk she is for vulvar cancer.



**Talk to your health care provider to
decide the best plan for you.**

How is HPV detected?

A Pap test, otherwise known as a "Pap smear", looks for cell changes caused by HPV and is the best way to screen for cervical cancer.

The American Cancer Society
estimates that in 2006, almost
10,000 women in the U.S. will be
diagnosed with cervical cancer,
resulting in nearly **4,000** deaths.

What can I do to reduce my risk of HPV and cervical cancer?

- Early HPV vaccination, regular screening and follow-up provides your best protection against cervical cancer.
- The only sure way to prevent HPV is to not have any genital contact with another individual. However, risk can still be reduced by being in a mutually faithful relationship, or, at least limiting sexual partners and choosing partners that have had no or few other partners.
- In heterosexual relationships, correct and consistent condom use is recommended and provides effective protection from many sexually transmitted diseases. However, condom use may only provide limited protection from HPV because HPV can infect areas that are not covered by a condom.
- Boost your immune system!

A strong immune system will help your body fight off infection. Here are a few ideas to boost your immune system...

- Stop smoking
- Reduce stress
- Eat a balanced diet, rich in vitamins and minerals, especially the B vitamins, vitamins C, D and E, calcium, iron and zinc.

