

Preteens Need HPV Vaccine to Prevent Cancer

Protect the Circle of Life: *“Let us put our minds together to see what life we can make for our children.” - Sitting Bull, Lakota Sioux, 1877*

Why does my child need HPV vaccine?

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a very common virus that can cause cancer. HPV vaccination is the best way to prevent your child from getting infected with the most common HPV types that cause cancer.

Cancer is a leading cause of death for American Indians. In women, HPV infections can cause cancers of the anus, cervix, vagina, vulva, and the mouth/throat area. HPV infection can cause cancers of the anus, penis, and the mouth/throat area in men. Also, both women and men can get genital warts from HPV infections. HPV vaccination provides protection from the infections that cause these health problems.

Who should get HPV vaccine?

All boys and girls need HPV vaccination when they are 11 or 12 years old so they can be protected from HPV infections. Teens and young adults who didn't start or finish the HPV vaccine series also need HPV vaccine. Young women can get HPV vaccine until they are 27 years old and young men can get HPV vaccine until they are 22 years old. Young men who have sex with other men or who have weakened immune systems can also get HPV vaccine until they are 27.

Does the HPV vaccine work?

Yes, HPV vaccine works very well. Since HPV vaccination started, HPV infections have decreased in teen girls and boys. HPV vaccine is also preventing cervical precancers in young women who were vaccinated as preteens and teens.

Is HPV vaccination safe?

Yes. HPV vaccination has been studied very carefully and no serious safety concerns have been linked to HPV vaccination. HPV vaccine, like all other vaccines, has been continually monitored to be sure it is safe and works well. Preteens and teens may experience mild side effects such as redness and soreness in the area of the arm where the shot was given. The benefits of HPV vaccination far outweigh any possible risk of side effects.

Some preteens and teens may faint after getting a shot or any other medical procedure. Sitting or lying down for about 15 minutes after getting shots can help prevent injuries that could happen if your child were to fall while fainting.

Serious side effects from the HPV vaccine are rare. Children with severe allergies to yeast or latex shouldn't get certain HPV vaccines. Be sure to tell the doctor or nurse if your child has any severe allergies.

How can I get help paying for HPV vaccine?

American Indian/Alaska Native children younger than 19 years of age can get shots for free through the Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program. All IHS, tribal and urban Indian health clinics offer shots through the VFC program. So do many private doctors. Check with your healthcare provider or your local clinic.



For more information about HPV infection and HPV vaccine, visit www.cdc.gov/HPV

