

GENITAL HUMAN PAPILLOMAVIRUS (HPV) is the most common sexually transmitted virus in the United States. More than half of sexually active men and women are infected with HPV at some time in their lives. Most HPV infections don't cause any symptoms and go away on their own. But HPV can cause cervical cancer in women. Cervical cancer is the 2nd leading cause of cancer deaths among women worldwide! In the United States, about 12,000 women get cervical cancer every year. HPV is also associated with several less common cancers, such as vaginal and vulvar cancers in women and other types of cancer in both men and women. It can also cause genital warts and warts in the throat. There is no cure for HPV infection, but some of the problems it causes can be treated.

There are currently three HPV vaccines: GARDASIL, GARDASIL-9, and CERVARIX. Each vaccine offers coverage against a number of HPV types which are associated with various cancers and infections.

GARDASIL: Recommended for girls and boys, Types 6, 11, 16, 18. Indicated for the prevention of cervical, vulvar, vaginal and anal cancer and genital warts.

GARDASIL-9: Recommended for girls and boys, Types 6, 11, 16, 18, 31, 33, 45, 52, and 58. Indicated for the prevention of cervical, vulvar, vaginal, and anal cancer and genital warts.

CERVARIX: Recommended only for girls. Types 16 and 18. Indicated for the prevention of cervical cancers.

Each vaccine is a three-dose series administered over six months. The second and third doses should be given at two and six months (respectively) after the first dose. The HPV vaccine may be given at the same time as other vaccines.

WHO SHOULD NOT GET THE HPV VACCINE?

The vaccine is not recommended for anyone who has ever had a life-threatening allergic reaction to any component of HPV vaccine or to a previous dose of HPV vaccine. Tell your doctor if the person getting vaccinated has any severe allergies including:

- An allergy to yeast.
- Is moderately or severely ill. People who are mildly ill when a dose of HPV vaccine is planned can still be vaccinated.
- Is currently pregnant or planning pregnancy during the course of treatment.

WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS OF THE HPV VACCINE?

Mild-to-moderate problems: Soreness, redness, or swelling where the shot was given, Fever and itching at the injection site.

Severe problems (rare) may include serious allergic reactions, with symptoms including: Difficulty breathing, Wheezing, hives, pale skin, fast heartbeat and dizziness.

REFERENCES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Epidemiology and Prevention of Vaccine-Preventable Diseases. Hamborsky J, Kroger A, Wolfe S, eds. 13th ed. Washington D.C. Public Health Foundation, 2015.

Vaccine Information Statement: HPV (Human Papillomavirus) Vaccine-Gardasil® Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). May 17, 2013.

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/vis-statements/hpv-gardasil.html>.

Accessed June 2015.

Vaccine Information Statement: HPV (Human Papillomavirus) Vaccine-Gardasil®-9 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). April 15, 2015.

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/vis-statements/hpv-gardasil-9.html>.

Accessed June 2015.

Vaccine Information Statement: HPV (Human Papillomavirus) Vaccine-Cervarix® Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). May 3, 2011.

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/vis-statements/hpv-cervarix.html>.

Accessed June 2015.

GARDASIL® [Human Papillomavirus Quadrivalent (Types 6, 11, 16, 18) Vaccine, Recombinant] Suspension for intramuscular injection. US Prescribing Information. Merck & Co., Inc. Whitehouse Station, NJ. April 2015.

GARDASIL® [Human Papillomavirus 9-valent Vaccine, Recombinant] Suspension for Intramuscular injection. US Prescribing Information. Merck & Co., Inc. Whitehouse Station, NJ. February 2015.

CERVARIX® [Human papillomavirus Bivalent (Types 6 and 18) Vaccine, Recombinant] Suspension for Intramuscular injection. US Prescribing Information. GlaxoSmithKline Biologicals. Research Triangle Park, NC