

HUMAN PAPILLOMAVIRUS (HPV)

Vaccine Fact Sheet

(HPV-9 VACCINE - GARDASIL9[®] VACCINE)

WHAT IS HPV AND HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

HPV is a very contagious virus that commonly infects people of all sexes. It has more than 100 strains, including about 40 that affect the anogenital area. Eight out of 10 Canadians become infected with HPV during their lifetime. Teens and young adults have high rates of HPV infection.

HPV can cause cancers of the anus, rectum, throat, oral cavity, cervix, vagina, vulva, and penis, as well as genital warts. Females who develop HPV cancer or precancer may require treatment that could limit their ability to have children.

Although most HPV infections would resolve on their own within two years, infections that do not resolve can cause cancer or warts. Many people with HPV do not have any symptoms and can spread the virus without knowing it.

HPV infections are transmitted by intimate skin-to-skin contact (through oral, vaginal, or anal sex) and can also be transmitted to an infant exposed to the virus in the mother's genital tract. Almost every unvaccinated person who is sexually active will get HPV at some time in their life.

HOW CAN HPV BE PREVENTED?

- Getting immunized is a safe and effective way to protect against HPV infection. The HPV-9 vaccine protects against nine diseases-causing strains of the virus: strains 6, 11 (can cause genital warts) and types 16, 18, 31, 33, 45, 52, 58 (can cause cancer). Vaccinating at a younger age is better, as the HPV vaccine works best when given before exposure to the virus
- The risk of HPV infection may be reduced by practicing safe sex for those who are sexually active. The use of condoms does not fully protect against HPV

HOW EFFECTIVE IS THE HPV-9 VACCINE?

Immunization against the strains contained in the HPV9 vaccine can prevent about 90% of high-risk cervical precancers, 87% of cervical cancers, 84% of anogenital cancers, and 90% of genital warts. The HPV-9 vaccine prevents cancers in both males and females.

PUBLIC HEALTH

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york.ca/immunizations



WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS OF THIS VACCINE?

- The HPV vaccine is safe and generally well-tolerated. The most common side effects are redness, pain and swelling at the injection site that are mild and short-lived. These side effects mean your immune system is responding to the vaccine and building up protection. Apply ice to the site and/or take a non-aspirin pain reliever to help minimize pain and/or swelling. Serious reactions are rare
- Students are observed for a minimum of 15 minutes after their vaccination to ensure there are no immediate side effects. Anyone who experiences serious health effects after they leave the clinic should consult their doctor and notify York Region Public Health

MORE ABOUT THE HPV-9 (GARDASIL 9[®]) VACCINE

- Ontario students in grades seven to 12 are offered the HPV-9 (Gardasil 9[®]) vaccine at no cost. Following graduation from secondary school, students need to purchase the HPV9 vaccine through their health care providers. This vaccine is strongly recommended for students
- The Gardasil 9[®] vaccine series require two doses recommended no earlier than six months apart if your child receives their first dose before the age of 15. Three doses of the vaccine are needed if your child is 15 years or older at the time of their first dose
- Get protected early—make sure your child gets the hepatitis B vaccine as soon as possible. If your child missed it at school, they can still receive the hepatitis B vaccine at a York Region Public Health community clinic. Visit york.ca/immunization for clinic information

WHO SHOULD NOT GET THIS VACCINE AT SCHOOL AND SHOULD CONSULT THEIR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER?

Anyone who:

- Had a severe reaction to a vaccine (e.g., anaphylaxis)
- Had a severe allergic reaction to previous HPV vaccine or any of its specific components or container (e.g., yeast, aluminum, sodium chloride, L-histidine, polysorbate 80, sodium borate)
- Has an illness or takes any medication that weakens the immune system
- Is younger than nine years of age or older than 45 years of age

As a precaution, if your child has a fever or feels very sick, wait until they are feeling better to get the vaccine.