

# HUMAN PAPILLOMAVIRUS (HPV) VACCINE INFORMATION

## What is HPV and how is it spread?

HPV is a common virus with more than 100 strains. Some strains of HPV cause cancers of the anus, rectum and throat while others cause genital warts or cervical cancer in females. Many people with HPV do not have any symptoms and can spread the virus without knowing it. Both males and females can be infected with HPV. Some types of HPV are spread through sexual contact with an infected person, including contact with genital skin or bodily fluids.

## How can HPV be prevented?

The virus is spread through skin-to-skin contact, so transmission can be reduced through:

- Delaying the start of sexual activity (waiting until you are older)
- Safer sex practices including using condoms or abstinence from all sexual activities
- Limiting the number of sexual partners and not having sex with someone who has had many partners
- Getting immunized before becoming sexually active is effective in protecting against most sexually transmitted HPV infections

## HPV 9 vaccine

All grade 7 students in Ontario will be offered HPV9 vaccine at no cost, providing protection against nine of the most prevalent disease-causing strains of HPV. One example of a HPV 9 vaccine is Gardasil® 9. HPV vaccination is a two-dose series if your child receives their first dose before the age of 15. Three doses of the vaccine are required if your child is 15 years or older at the time of their first dose. If your child misses being vaccinated in grade 7, they can receive HPV 9 vaccine until the end of grade 12 at a York Region Public Health community immunization clinic. Visit [york.ca/immunization](http://york.ca/immunization) for clinic information.

## Who should NOT get this vaccine at school and should consult their health care provider?

- Those who have had a severe reaction to a vaccine
- Those who have an illness or take any medication that weakens the immune system
- Those who have been previously immunized with a complete series of the HPV vaccine
- Those who have an allergy to yeast, aluminum, sodium chloride, L-histidine, polysorbate 80, sodium borate
- **Pregnant students should wait until after pregnancy to start or complete the vaccine**

## What are the side effects of this vaccine?

- Some people may experience headache, fatigue, redness, pain and swelling at the injection site that may last about a day. Apply ice to the site and/or take a non-aspirin pain reliever to help minimize pain and/or swelling
- 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 health care provider and notify York Region Public Health

## PUBLIC HEALTH

1-877-464-9675

TTY 1-866-512-6228

[york.ca/immunizations](http://york.ca/immunizations)

