



# HPV VACCINE IS CANCER PREVENTION

## HPV Vaccine for Preteens and Teens

HPV vaccination is recommended at ages 11-12 years to protect against cancers caused by HPV infection.

### Why does my child need HPV vaccine?

**Human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine protects against cancers caused by HPV infection.** HPV is a common virus that infects teens and adults. About 13 million people, including teens, become infected with HPV each year. HPV infection can cause cervical, vaginal, and vulvar cancers in women and penile cancer in men. HPV can also cause anal cancer, cancer of the back of the throat (oropharynx), and genital warts in both men and women.

### When should my child be vaccinated?

**All kids who are 11 or 12 years old should get two shots of HPV vaccine 6-12 months apart.** Getting vaccinated on time protects preteens long before ever being exposed to the virus. People get HPV from another person during intimate sexual contact.

Some children may need three doses of HPV vaccine. For example, adolescents who receive their two shots less than 5 months apart will need a third dose for best protection. Also, children who start the vaccine series on or after their 15th birthday need three shots given over 6 months. If your teen hasn't gotten the vaccine yet, talk to their doctor about getting it as soon as possible.

The best way to remember to get your child all of the recommended doses is to make an appointment for the remaining shots before you leave the doctor's office or clinic.

### Is HPV vaccine safe for my child?

**HPV vaccination provides safe, effective, and long-lasting protection against cancers caused by HPV.** HPV vaccine has a reassuring safety record that's backed by 15 years of monitoring and research.

Like any vaccine or medicine, HPV vaccination can cause side effects. The most common side effects are mild and include pain, redness, or swelling in the arm where the shot was given; dizziness, fainting, nausea, and headache. Fainting after any vaccine, including HPV vaccine, is more common among adolescents.

To prevent fainting and injuries related to fainting, adolescents should be seated or lying down during vaccination and remain in that position for 15 minutes after the vaccine is given. The benefits of HPV vaccination far outweigh any potential risk of side effects.

It is important to tell the doctor or nurse if your child has any severe allergies, including an allergy to latex or yeast. HPV vaccine is not recommended for anyone who is pregnant.

### How can I get help paying for these vaccines?

**The Vaccines for Children (VFC) program provides vaccines for children ages 18 years and younger who are uninsured, Medicaid-eligible, American Indian or Alaska Native.**

Learn more at [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/vfc/parents/qa-detailed.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/vfc/parents/qa-detailed.html)

### Where can I learn more?

Talk to your child's doctor about HPV vaccination and ask about other vaccines your child may need.

You can also find out more about HPV vaccination at

[www.cdc.gov/hpv](http://www.cdc.gov/hpv)