

# HPV

## vaccination

Protecting against HPV infection to help reduce your risk of cancer



# The universal HPV

## immunisation programme

The HPV vaccine has been offered to all girls in school year 8 for over ten years. From September 2019 the vaccine will also be offered to year 8 boys.

This is because the evidence is clear that the HPV vaccine helps protect both boys and girls from HPV-related cancers.

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### **The HPV vaccine helps protect you from being infected by the human papillomavirus (HPV).**

This virus increases the risk of developing some cancers later in life, such as:

- cervical cancer
- some mouth and throat cancers
- some cancers of the anus and genital areas.

The HPV vaccine does not protect against other sexually transmitted infections.

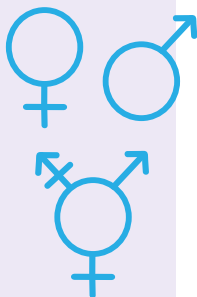
# HPV and how it spreads

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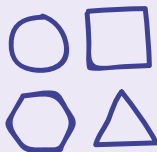
**HPV infection is very common.** More than 70% of unvaccinated people will get it

70%

**HPV lives on the skin in and around the whole genital area,** so using condoms does not provide complete protection from HPV



There are **many different types** of HPV



Most HPV infections do not cause any symptoms and **get better on their own**



**Some do not clear up** and can lead to cancer whilst others cause genital warts



## **What difference has the HPV vaccine made so far?**

Over 80 million people have received the vaccine worldwide.

In time it is expected that the vaccine will save hundreds of lives every year in the UK. A recent Scottish study has already shown a 71% reduction in pre-cancerous cervical disease in young women.

Since the start of the vaccination programme in the UK there has been a big decline in the number of young people with genital warts.

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## **Having the HPV vaccine**

The vaccine is given in your arm and you need two doses to be fully protected.

The first injection is given in year 8 and the second one usually 6 to 12 months later. You will be informed when you are due the second dose.

To give you the best protection, the vaccine should be given before you become sexually active.

If you are sexually active you should still have the vaccine.



## **What if I have not had my first HPV vaccine by the age of 15?**

If you have not had any HPV vaccine before you are 15 years old you will need three doses. This is because the response to two doses in older girls and boys is not as good.

The second dose will be given around a month after the first dose, and a final dose is given around six months after the first dose.

If you have missed your vaccine you should speak to the immunisation team or your GP practice about making an appointment as soon as possible.

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## **I missed my vaccination, can I still have it?**

Yes. If you missed either of your vaccinations at school, you can have them up to your 25<sup>th</sup> birthday. Contact your school nurse or GP practice as soon as possible.



## **Women who have had the vaccine will still need to go for cervical screening**

All women aged 25 and over in England are offered cervical screening tests.

The vaccine will prevent around 70% of cervical cancer cases, but screening is still needed to pick up any other cervical abnormalities.

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## **What about the other cancers?**

There are currently no screening programmes for other HPV-related cancers. If you are worried about any symptoms speak to your GP practice.

For more information about the side effect of the vaccine or to see the patient information leaflet for the vaccine, visit [www.nhs.uk/hpv](http://www.nhs.uk/hpv)



# Remember



to get your two doses of HPV vaccine at least 6 months apart



to get your HPV vaccine now, to protect yourself against a number of cancers in the future



in time it is expected that the vaccine will save hundreds of lives every year in the UK.

**For more information, visit [www.nhs.uk/hpv](http://www.nhs.uk/hpv)**

A complete list of ingredients for the vaccine is given in the: Patient Information Leaflet (PIL):

[www.medicines.org.uk/emc/medicine/19033](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/medicine/19033)

The Summary of Product Characteristics (SPC):

[www.medicines.org.uk/emc/medicine/19016/SPC/gardasil/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/medicine/19016/SPC/gardasil/)



This leaflet has been produced by Public Health England.  
**Immunisation, helping to protect everyone at every age.**