

What is HPV?

The human papilloma virus (HPV) is a type of virus that infects the skin and cells lining the inside of the body.

HPV infection is very common and results from close human-to-human contact, particularly during sexual activity. It is likely that most sexually active individuals will be infected with HPV at some time in their life. The vast majority of us clear the infection without knowing we have even been infected. A very small number of individuals, maybe ~5% do not clear the infection and an even smaller number, (~1200 patients / year in the UK), will go on to get HPV related oropharyngeal cancer.

Professor Terry M Jones, Director, Liverpool Head and Neck Centre

HPV is a very common infection 8 in 10 people

will be linked to the virus at some point in their lives

The HPV vaccine has been offered to all girls in school year 8 since September 2008. From September 2019 the vaccine has also been offered to year 8 boys. There is clear evidence that the HPV vaccine helps protect both boys and girls from HPV-related cancers.

More than 280 million doses of the HPV vaccine have been given worldwide, including 120 million doses in the US and over 10 million in the UK.

By vaccinating against HPV before becoming sexually active, the risk of cancer when older is reduced...

All statistics are taken from Cancer Research UK and Head & Neck Cancer Alliance.

If there was a vaccine against cancer, wouldn't you want your kids to receive it?

HPV vaccine is **cancer prevention**
for both boys and girls



24/7 patient and caregiver support line service:

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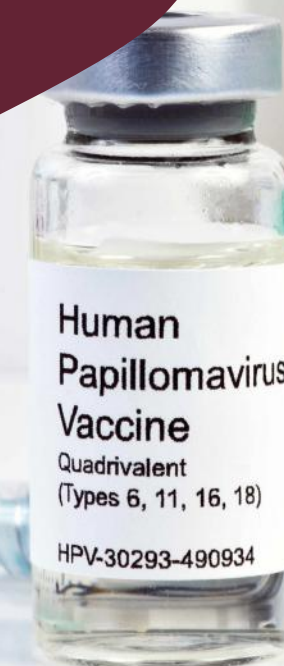


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The Swallows

Head & Neck Cancer Support Group

Registered Charity Number: 1149794



Human Papilloma Virus

Causes, prevention and vaccinations

Boys now eligible for vaccinations

Important information for parents and carers

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Girls aged 12 to 13 have been offered the HPV vaccine since 2008 in the UK



From September 2019, boys aged 12-13 became eligible for the HPV vaccine



Why are boys now getting the jab?

The programme to vaccinate teenage girls, and reduce cervical cancers, has proved very successful. There has been a reduction in HPV infections, genital warts and pre-cancerous growths in teenage girls and young women since the vaccine was introduced.

Other groups, like teenage boys, have seen benefits too because the virus is not being passed on to them. To protect boys even more, and reduce head and neck cancers and cancers of the anus and penis in the future, health experts say they should be offered the HPV vaccine too.

How is Head & Neck Cancer linked to HPV?

HPV types 16 and 18, are more closely associated with oropharyngeal cancers (cancers of the tonsils, base of tongue and throat). Oropharyngeal cancer associated with HPV infection has increased dramatically over the past 20 years in young men and women.

Having the HPV vaccine

The vaccine is given as an injection in the upper arm. Most people will need only one dose to be protected. This is usually given around school year 8.



Why is it needed at that age?

The HPV vaccine works best if boys and girls get it before they become sexually active. High-risk HPV infections can be spread by any skin-to-skin contact, and are usually found on the fingers, hands, mouth and genitals. This means the virus can be spread during any kind of sexual activity, including touching.

To be fully protected against HPV, currently two doses of the vaccine are needed. Protection last for around 10 years, although most of the time for much longer.

Who is eligible for the vaccine and when?

Boys aged 12-13 (England, Northern Ireland and Wales)	FREE
Boys aged 11-12 (Scotland)	FREE
Boys aged 14-18	Please ask about the cost
Men who have sex with men	FREE to age 45
Girls aged 12-13	FREE

Men who have sex with men do not benefit in the same way from the girls' programme, so may be left unprotected from HPV. That's why men who have sex with men up to the age of 45 can have a free HPV vaccine if they visit a sexual health clinic or their GP in the UK.



Talk to your GP to find out more about the HPV vaccination for boys.

Thank you to our health professionals who helped in the writing of this leaflet:

Guide for parents



Why does my child need the HPV vaccine?

The HPV vaccine is important because it prevents infections that can cause cancer.

Is my child really at risk for HPV?

HPV is a very common infection in women and men that can cause cancer. The vaccine will help protect your child from the cancers and diseases caused by HPV.

Why do they need HPV vaccine at such a young age?

Like all vaccines, the Government want to give the HPV vaccine earlier rather than later. If you wait, your child may need three vaccine shots instead of two.

What diseases are caused by HPV?

Some HPV infections can cause cancer - like cancer of the cervix or in the back of the throat.

How do you know the vaccine works?

Studies continue to prove HPV vaccinations work extremely well, decreasing the number of infections and HPV pre-cancers in young people since it has been available.



The UK is now one of an increasing number of countries to offer HPV vaccination for both girls & boys.

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