Is the HPV vaccine safe?

YES. Studies show that the vaccine is extremely safe. This vaccine has been studied in thousands of men and women in the United States and around the world. More than 67 million doses of HPV vaccine have been distributed and there have been no serious safety concerns. Occasional, mild side effects include pain at the injection site, headache, fever, nausea and fainting. HPV, and all vaccines, are continually monitored for safety.

How is the vaccine given?

HPV vaccine is given in three doses over six months.

- First dose: Given now or at a date you and your health care provider choose
- Second dose: Given 1-2 months after the first dose
- Third dose: Given 12 weeks after the second dose AND 6 months (24 weeks) after the first dose

HPV vaccine can be given at the same time as other vaccines.

Can I get the vaccine without my parent's permission?

Technically, yes. If you are 14 years of age and older in North Dakota, you have the legal right to get the HPV vaccine even if your parents refuse to pay or okay it.

How can I get the vaccine if I don't have insurance and cannot afford it?

HPV vaccine can be expensive, around $490 for all three injections. However, if you are insured, your insurance should cover the costs. If you are 18 or younger and you meet one of the following qualifications, you are eligible to receive the vaccine at no cost through the federally-funded, state-operated Vaccines For Children (VFC) program. You qualify if you:

- Are eligible for Medicaid
- Have no health insurance (uninsured)
- Are Native American or Alaskan Native
- Have health insurance, but it does not cover the cost of the vaccine (underinsured)

North Dakota also provides HPV vaccine for uninsured and underinsured adults 19 and older.

Where can I get more information?

- Talk to your healthcare provider or local public health unit
- NDDoH website and HPV information

  www.ndhealth.gov/immunize

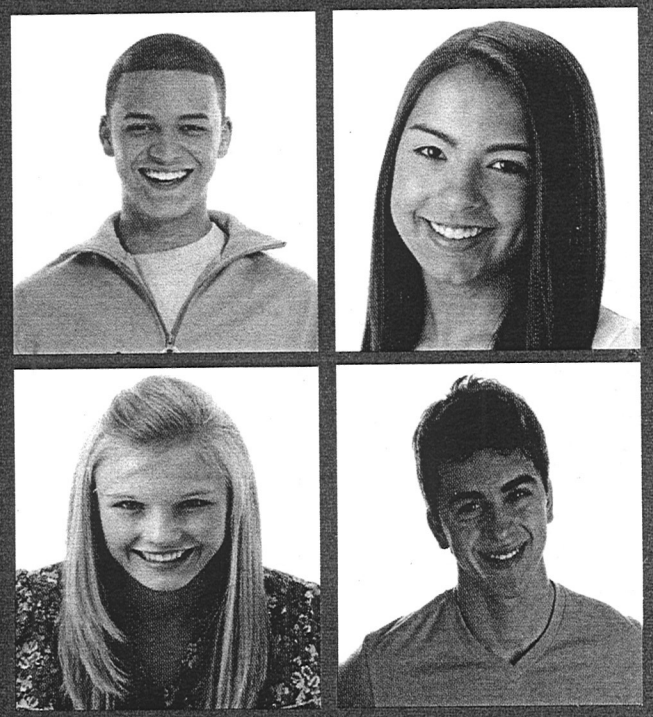
  www.gethpvvaccine.com
- CDC HPV information

  www.cdc.gov/hpv

NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT of HEALTH

HPV

Human Papillomavirus



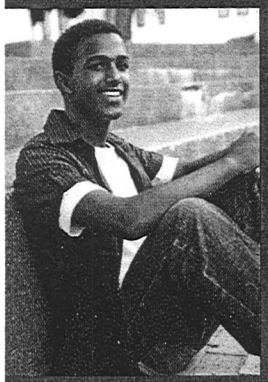
Questions and Answers about Risk and Prevention

What is Human Papillomavirus (HPV)?

HPV is a common virus passed from person to person through sexual contact. It can be spread even if there is no intercourse. There are more than 40 types of HPV that can infect the genital area, mouth and throat of both males and females.

How common is HPV?

HPV is the most common sexually transmitted infection in the United States.



At least half of sexually active people will get HPV some time in their lives. Every year in the U.S., about 6 million people get HPV, although most never know it. The infected person can spread the virus to other sexual partners without even knowing it.

HPV is most common in people in their late teens and early 20s.

What are the symptoms of HPV?

Some people will develop visible growths or bumps in the genital area (called genital warts). The virus lives in the body and usually causes no symptoms. Most men and women who have HPV do not even know they are infected. There is no cure for HPV infection and most of the time the infection will clear on its own, but other times it will not.

What is the connection between HPV and cancer?

In the US, one person every 20 minutes gets cancer caused by HPV. Almost all cervical cancer is caused by HPV. HPV is also a leading cause of many other common cancers including vulvar and vaginal cancers in women, penile cancers in men and anal and oropharyngeal (cancer of the mouth and throat) in men and women.

Each year in the U.S., about 18,000 HPV associated cancers affect women and 8,000 affect men.

How can I prevent HPV and its related diseases?

- Get vaccinated.
- Use condoms or other latex barriers for oral, anal and penile-vaginal sex to reduce the risk of getting or passing HPV.
- Girls/women should get regular pap tests to detect HPV lesions and treat them before they become cancerous.
- Some experts recommend yearly annual pap smears for certain high risk groups.

What is the HPV vaccine?

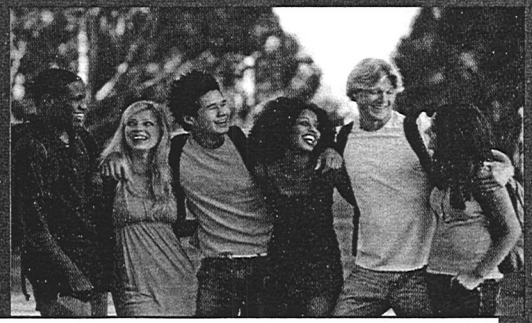
There are three HPV vaccines approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). All three vaccines (Cervarix®, Gardasil® and Gardasil 9®) protect against the two most common strains of HPV that cause approximately 70 percent of all cervical cancers. Gardasil® and Gardasil 9® also prevent most genital warts and other HPV associated cancers.

Who should get the HPV vaccine?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) recommend routine HPV vaccination for all 11 to 12-year-old girls and boys. Ideally, the vaccine should be given prior to having any sexual contact where you could have been exposed to HPV. This is because the vaccine has the best chance of being most effective if given before exposure to HPV. The vaccine is designed to offer lifelong protection against HPV, but is not meant to encourage sexual activity. Catch-up vaccination is also recommended for male and female teens 13 to 18 and adults 19 to 26 who were not previously vaccinated.

What if I'm already sexually active?

If you are already sexually active, you should still get vaccinated against HPV.

What if I already have HPV?

You can still benefit from the vaccine's protection against other types of HPV. The vaccine protects against four types of HPV and few people have them all. The vaccine has been shown to be approximately 99 percent effective in developing immunity in individuals already infected with one type of HPV.