

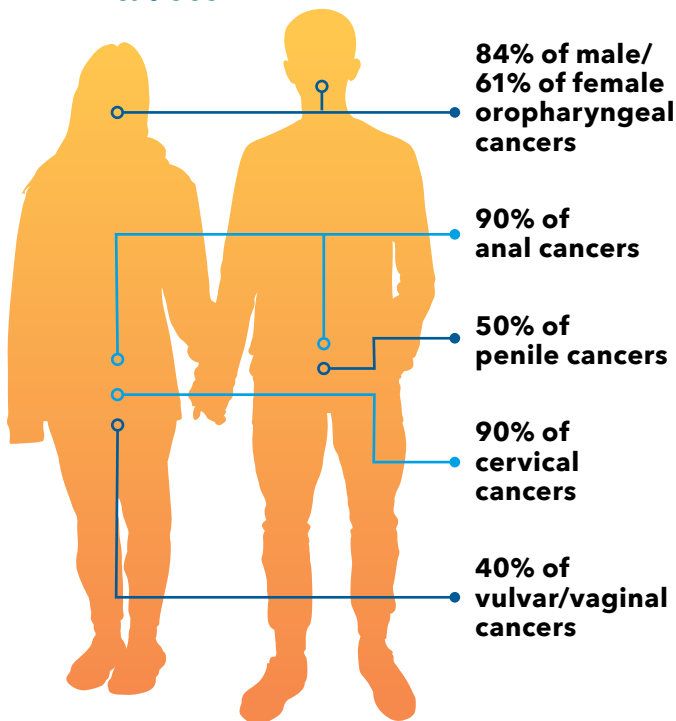
The HPV vaccine is cancer prevention for your child

What is HPV?

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a group of over 100 different types of viruses, more than 40 of which are spread through sexual contact.

About 75% of unvaccinated sexually active people will get at least one HPV infection in their lifetime, making it the most common sexually transmitted infection (STI).¹ After one sexual experience with one partner, the risk of HPV infection is approximately 30%.² Anybody who engages in any oral or genital contact with another person can get HPV, even if their partner shows no signs of infection.³

HPV causes:



In a survey of parents conducted by the Sex Information and Education Council of Canada (SIECCAN), most (55%) agreed that HPV could have serious health consequences for their child.⁴

Concerns parents may have about the HPV vaccine

Is the HPV vaccine safe and effective?

The HPV vaccine is a very effective way to protect your child's health; the vaccine prevents infection with common HPV types that cause cancer and the majority of cases of genital warts.⁵ Depending on the vaccine brand (Gardasil 9 or Cervarix), the vaccine is offered on a two or three dose schedule. It is not necessary to re-immunize or get a booster afterwards.

Vaccines are approved for use in Canada when it is determined that the vaccine has met very strict safety standards.⁶ **15 years of safety monitoring has indicated that the HPV vaccine is very safe.⁷** The safety and effectiveness of the HPV vaccine has been studied and reviewed by Health Canada and the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) and is recommended to Canadians.⁸



Is my child too young for the vaccine?

Being vaccinated against HPV before your child is sexually active provides them with the highest level of protection. Most people who are sexually active will have an HPV infection within 2-5 years of becoming sexually active if not sooner.⁹ As STI rates continue to increase¹⁰ and condom use decreases¹¹ among youth in Canada, The HPV vaccine provides lifetime protection from HPV-related cancers.

Possible vaccine side effects?

In research conducted by SIECCAN, **39%** of parents expressed concern about possible side effects of the HPV vaccine for their child. The most common HPV vaccine side effects are mild and similar to those of other routine vaccines including pain and redness at the injection site, fever, dizziness, headache, and nausea. Anaphylaxis may occur, but very rarely.¹²

Does the vaccine affect fertility?

There is no association between receiving the HPV vaccine and an increased risk of infertility.¹³

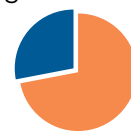
Reducing your child's risk of HPV-related cancer contributes to their overall reproductive and general health as HPV infections can increase infertility for both females and males.¹⁴

Does the vaccine promote earlier sexual activity?

Research indicates that receiving the HPV vaccine does not promote earlier, more frequent or riskier sexual activity among youth.¹⁵ The vaccine, however, will provide protection against cancers caused by sexually transmitted HPV.

Is it important that my son gets vaccinated against HPV?

People of every gender and sexual orientation can become infected with HPV. HPV causes 63% of penile cancers and 89% of anal cancers.¹⁶ Oropharyngeal cancers (cancers of the back of the throat) are the most common HPV-cancers among men and are on the rise,^{17,18} with **72%** of diagnoses attributed to an HPV infection.¹⁹



Not only will the HPV vaccine protect your son from HPV infection, HPV-related cancers, and genital warts, it will also protect their future partners from HPV.

How your child can get vaccinated:

The vaccine is available for free in schools, in all provinces and territories (elementary grades differ based on each province or territory), or through catch-up programs for up to 26 years of age. In some provinces and territories, Pharmacists and Nurse Practitioners can prescribe and administer the vaccine. Speak to your Healthcare Provider or local health authority for more information.²⁰

If your child has not received the vaccine in school,

1. Speak to a Healthcare Provider.
2. Get a prescription from a physician or nurse practitioner. In some provinces, pharmacists can also provide a prescription.
3. Pick up their vaccine (Cervarix or Gardasil 9) and get vaccinated. In all provinces, primary care providers, physicians, nurse practitioners, and pharmacists can administer the vaccine. The territories differ in allowing pharmacists to administer the vaccine
4. Submit your private insurance claim if applicable.

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