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# HPV Vaccination



Protecting  
against  
HPV infection

to help reduce  
your risk  
of cancer

# HPV Immunisation Programme

The HPV vaccine has been offered to all girls in school year 8 for over 10 years. From September 2019, the vaccine is being offered to everyone (girls and boys) in year 8.

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

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

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

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

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

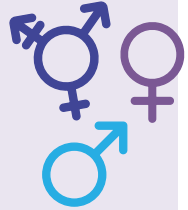
# HPV and how it spreads

**HPV infection is very common.**

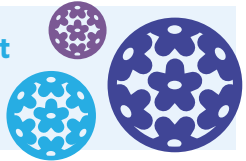
More than 7 out of 10 people who have not had the HPV vaccination will get it



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



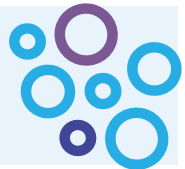
There are **many different types** of HPV



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



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



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

Since the HPV programme started in 2008, evidence from the UK shows:

- ↓ a large reduction in the number of HPV infections with the main cancer causing HPV types;
- ↓ a fall in the number of cases of genital warts; and
- ↓ a reduction in pre-cancerous disease of the cervix in 7 out of 10 young women.

**In time it is expected that the vaccine will save hundreds of lives every year in the UK by preventing cancer.**

## 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 at school in year 8. The second one is usually given six to 12 months later in school. The school nurse or immunisation team will let you know when it's due.

**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 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.

## I missed my vaccination. Can I still have it?

Yes. If you are in the eligible groups and have missed any of your HPV vaccinations at school, you can still have them up until your 25th birthday. Contact your school nurse or immunisation team or your GP practice.



## Side effects of the HPV vaccine

Side effects are usually mild.

- Soreness, swelling and redness in the arm are common but wear off in a couple of days
- Serious side effects are extremely rare.

As with all vaccines, reports of side effects are closely monitored and reviewed. Extensive reviews of the safety of the HPV vaccine have found that evidence does not support a link between the vaccine and a number of serious and chronic illnesses.

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You can read a safety review on HPV vaccines at: [www.who.int/vaccine\\_safety/committee/topics/hpv/June\\_2017/en](http://www.who.int/vaccine_safety/committee/topics/hpv/June_2017/en)

You can report suspected side effects of vaccines and medicines through the Yellow Card scheme online at: [www.yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk](http://www.yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk) or by calling the hotline on **0800 731 6789** (Monday to Friday 10am to 2pm).

## What do I need to do?

If you receive a consent form from school, make sure you and your parent or guardian read the information and return the filled-in form to school as soon as possible.

It's best to involve your parent or guardian, but in some circumstances you can give permission yourself if you fully understand what is being offered.

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You can get information on consent in health care for young people from:  
[www.wales.nhs.uk/governance-emanual/patient-consent](http://www.wales.nhs.uk/governance-emanual/patient-consent)

## What should I do if I feel unwell after the vaccination?

If you feel unwell with a temperature after the vaccination, and need to take something you can take paracetamol or ibuprofen. Read the instructions carefully and make sure you take the correct dose.

If necessary, take a second dose later. If your temperature is still high after the second dose, contact NHS Direct Wales on **0845 46 47** (or call 111 if this service is available in your area) for further advice.

**Do not take medicines that contain aspirin if you are under 16 years of age.**



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

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

The vaccine will prevent around 7 out of 10 cervical cancer cases but screening can find other HPV infection. By finding infection or cell changes early, screening can prevent cervical cancer from developing.

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For more information visit: [www.cervicalscreeningwales.wales.nhs.uk/home](http://www.cervicalscreeningwales.wales.nhs.uk/home)

## 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.

## Remember to:

- ✓ get your HPV vaccine now;
- ✓ get the second dose at least six months later;
- ✓ protect yourself against cancers caused by HPV.

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



## For more information

You can speak to your school nurse or immunisation team, or phone NHS Direct Wales on **0845 46 47** (or call 111 if this service is available in your area) or visit: [www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/doityourself/vaccinations/HPVvaccine](http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/doityourself/vaccinations/HPVvaccine)

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**You can find more information on possible side effects and vaccine contents 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 (SmPC) [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/medicine/19016/SPC/gardasil](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/medicine/19016/SPC/gardasil)

The routine vaccination schedule that shows you which vaccinations are offered in Wales is available from: [www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/livewell/vaccinations/Leaflets](http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/livewell/vaccinations/Leaflets)



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