

Human Papillomavirus (HPV-9) Vaccine

Get protected, get immunized

- Vaccines make your immune system stronger. They build antibodies to help prevent diseases.
- Immunization is safe. It is much safer to get immunized than to get these diseases.

What is the HPV-9 vaccine?

This vaccine protects against 9 strains (types) of human papillomavirus (HPV).

What is HPV?

HPV is a virus. It is the most common sexually transmitted infection and can cause genital warts. An HPV infection will often go away on its own. Some people get a long-term infection. This can lead to cancer of the cervix, anus, throat, mouth, penis, vagina, or vulva. HPV is responsible for nearly:

- 100% of cervical cancers
- 90% of anal cancers
- 60% to 73% of throat (oropharyngeal) cancers
- 40% to 50% of penile cancers
- 40% of vaginal and vulva cancers

Who is most at risk?

HPV is very common. Without getting immunized, most people who are sexually active will get an HPV infection at some time, even if they have had only 1 sexual partner.

How does it spread?

HPV spreads by sexual contact or skin-to-skin contact in the genital area. If you are pregnant and have HPV, you can spread it to your baby during vaginal childbirth. HPV can spread even if you have no symptoms or you cannot see any warts.

Who should get the HPV-9 vaccine?

Grade 6 students can get the HPV-9 vaccine as part of the school immunization program. If you did not get the HPV-9 vaccine in Grade 6, you can still get it free of charge up to and including age 26 years. You may also be able to get this vaccine free of charge if you are age 9 to 45 years and:

- You have had or are going to have an organ transplant.
- You have had a stem cell transplant or CAR T-cell therapy (a type of cancer treatment).

Ask your healthcare provider if you can get this vaccine free of charge.

If you cannot get this vaccine free of charge, it may still benefit you. Talk to your healthcare provider to find out if it is a good idea for you. Check with your health insurance provider to see if your plan covers the cost.

How many doses do I need?

If you have a healthy immune system, you need 2 doses, 6 months apart.

If you have a weakened immune system, you need 3 doses, over 6 months.

How well does the vaccine work?

The HPV-9 vaccine works very well to prevent HPV infections and genital warts.

The HPV-9 vaccine works best in children and teens before they have any sexual contact (such as oral sex or intercourse).

The HPV-9 vaccine protects against most but not all cervical cancers. It is important to have regular cervical cancer screening (Pap tests or cervical screening tests), even if you get the HPV-9 vaccine. When to get screened is based on your age and factors that increase your risk. Talk to your healthcare provider about testing.

Where can I get the HPV-9 vaccine?

Grade 6 students can get the vaccine in school. Grade 9 students who missed getting the vaccine can also get it in school. Parents and guardians will get an information package that includes a consent form. If you want your child to get the vaccine in school, you must complete and sign the consent form and return it according to the instructions provided.

If you can get this vaccine free of charge, contact your local public health or community health centre. If you want the vaccine and need to pay for it, contact a private immunization clinic. You can also ask your doctor or pharmacist if they sell the vaccine.

Are there side effects from the HPV-9 vaccine?

There can be side effects from the HPV-9 vaccine, but they tend to be mild and go away in a few days. Side effects may include:

- redness where you had the needle that may look red on lighter skin or purple on darker skin
- swelling, a hard spot, bruising, bleeding, itching, or feeling sore where you had the needle
- a headache
- feeling dizzy
- a fever
- feeling tired
- body aches
- feeling sick to your stomach (nausea), stomach pain, or loose stool (diarrhea)
- a sore throat

At least 1 out of 100 people who got this vaccine reported 1 or more of these side effects. In some cases, it is unknown if the vaccine caused these side effects.

It is important to stay at the clinic for 15 minutes after your vaccine. Some people may have a rare but serious allergic reaction called anaphylaxis. If anaphylaxis happens, you will get medicine to treat the symptoms.

It is rare to have a serious side effect after a vaccine. Call Health Link at 811 to report any serious or unusual side effects.

How can I manage side effects?

- To help with soreness and swelling, put a cool, wet cloth over the area where you had the needle.
- There is medicine to help with a fever or pain. Check with your healthcare provider if you are not sure what medicine or dose to take. Follow the directions on the package.
- Some people with health problems, such as a weakened immune system, must call their healthcare provider if they get a fever. If you have been told to do this, call your healthcare provider even if you think the fever is from the vaccine.

Who may not be able to get the HPV-9 vaccine?

You may not be able to get this vaccine if:

- You have an allergy to any part of the vaccine. Be sure to tell your healthcare provider about any allergies you may have.
- You had a severe (serious) or unusual side effect after this vaccine or one like it.

If either of these apply, check with your healthcare provider or a public health nurse before you get the vaccine.

Although you can get the vaccine if you have a mild illness such as a cold or fever, it is best to stay home until you feel better. This helps prevent spreading your illness to others.

I have a fear of needles. How can I prepare for my immunization?

Many adults and children are afraid of needles. There are things you can do before, during, and after immunization to be more comfortable.



Scan the QR code, visit ahs.ca/vaccinecomfort, or call Health Link at 811 for information.

For more information about immunization



Scan the QR code or go to hpvtool.healthiertogether.ca to help you decide about the HPV vaccine.



Scan the QR code or go to primarycarealberta.ca/immunize.



Call Health Link at 811.

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