

# 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?

The HPV-9 vaccine protects against 9 strains (types) of human papillomavirus. These 9 strains may cause up to:

- 92% of cervical cancers
- 75% of anal cancers
- 57% of penile cancers
- 72% of vaginal cancers
- 25% of head and neck cancers
- 90% of genital warts

## 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 vagina, vulva, penis, anus, mouth, or throat. HPV causes almost all cervical cancers.

## Who is most at risk?

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

## 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 be 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 for free up to and including age 26 years.

You may be able to get this vaccine for free 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 for free.

If you cannot get this vaccine for free, it may still benefit you. Talk to your doctor 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 and get your first dose before age 15 years, you need 2 doses, 6 months apart.

You need 3 doses over 6 months if:

- You get your first dose at age 15 years or older.
- You have a weak immune system.

## How well does the vaccine work?

How well the HPV-9 vaccine works is different for each strain. After you get the recommended number of doses, the HPV-9 vaccine is highly effective in preventing infection and genital warts from the 9 strains of HPV that the vaccine protects against.

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

Because the vaccine does not protect against all types of cervical cancer, it is still important to have regular Pap tests (even if you have had the vaccine). When to have a Pap test is based on your age and on things that increase your risk. Talk to your doctor about when to have this test.

See reverse for more information.

## 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 at the usual time 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 for free, contact your local public health or community health centre. If you want the vaccine and need to pay for it, contact a travel health clinic or talk to your doctor or pharmacist.

## 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, 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 doctor or pharmacist 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 weak immune system, must call their doctor if they get a fever. If you have been told to do this, call your doctor even if you think the fever is from the vaccine.

## Who should not 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.
- You had a severe (serious) or unusual side effect after this vaccine or one like it.
- You are pregnant.

If you are planning to get pregnant, you should finish all the recommended doses of HPV-9 vaccine before you start trying to get pregnant.

If you have allergies or have had a side effect to this vaccine, check with your doctor 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, you should stay home until you are feeling better to 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. You can do many things before, during, and after immunization to be more comfortable.



Scan the QR code, visit [ahs.ca/vaccinecomfort](https://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](https://hpvtool.healthiertogether.ca) to help you decide about the HPV vaccine



Call Health Link at 811



Scan the QR code or go to [ahs.ca/immunize](https://ahs.ca/immunize)