

Important Information about Human Papillomavirus (HPV)

The Disease - Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) that spreads with intimate skin-to-skin contact or intercourse.

- It is the most common viral STI in the U.S. and is prevalent among adolescents.
- As reported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), up to 64% of teen or pre-teen girls may be infected with HPV, and 75% of new HPV infections are in persons ages 15 to 24 years.
- More than 50% of sexually active men and women are infected with HPV at some time in their lives.

There are about 40 different types of HPV that cause infection.

- Strains 6 and 11 cause 90% of genital warts
- Strains 16 and 18 cause up to 70% of cervical cancers, 90% of anal cancers, 40% of vulvar, vaginal and penile cancers, and 12% of oral and pharyngeal cancers.

These cancers can be life-threatening, or cause other serious adverse health effects, but most of the cancers can be prevented by the HPV vaccine!

In 2009, 12,357 women in the United States were diagnosed with cervical cancer and 3,909 women in the United States died from cervical cancer.

The HPV Vaccine - A routine 3-dose series of HPV vaccine is recommended for both boys and girls by

The American Academy of Pediatrics, The American Academy of Family Physicians, and the CDC.

The routine schedule includes:

- 1st dose – routinely given at age 11-12 years; may be given as early as age 9 years
- 2nd dose – 1 to 2 months after the first dose
- 3rd dose – 6 months after the first dose

The vaccine is also recommended for men up to 21 and women up to 26 years of age who did not receive it when they were younger.

Why vaccine during the preteen years (ages 11-12)?

- Preteens have a stronger immune response to HPV vaccine than do older adolescents.
- For the best lifetime protection against HPV, preteens and teens should be vaccinated
- It is key to complete the vaccine series **before** the onset of any sexual activity in order for it to provide the most protection.
- Studies show that adolescents who receive HPV vaccine do not have sex any earlier than those who only received other teen vaccines.