

Effectively Communicating with Parents About the HPV Vaccine

What you say matters; how you say it matters even more

Many parents/caregivers will choose to give their children the HPV vaccine when their healthcare provider strongly recommends the vaccine and answers their questions.

Recommend HPV vaccine in the **same way** as you recommend other vaccines.

Consider saying,

“Your child is due for the vaccine that protects against HPV cancers. It is important for their health and I recommend they get the HPV vaccine.”

If a parent hesitates or asks a question after your recommendation, **listen**. You may start with repeating the parent’s question.

Address parents’ questions using the responses below as a starting point.

Why does my child need HPV vaccination?

HPV is a common virus that can cause six types of cancer. In women, HPV can cause cervical, throat, anal, vaginal, and vulvar cancer. In men, HPV can cause throat, anal, and penile cancer. Almost all cervical cancers are caused by HPV infection. On-time HPV vaccination can protect your child from getting most of these cancers in the future.

Is the HPV vaccine safe?

Yes, the HPV vaccine is safe. Millions of children have received the HPV vaccine in over 140 countries. This vaccine is one of the most studied vaccines available and these studies show that it is very safe.

Does the HPV vaccine cause side-effects?

HPV vaccination is very safe. Like other vaccines, the common side effects from HPV vaccination are mild and might include: fever, headache and pain or redness in the arm where the shot was given. Rarely children may faint after getting an injection and they could be injured if they fall. We'll have your child stay seated for about 15 minutes after the vaccine.

Is my child really at risk for HPV infection?

HPV is a very common virus. Nearly everyone will get an HPV infection at some point in their lives. On-time HPV vaccination will help protect your child from the cancers and diseases that HPV can cause when they are older.

Will HPV vaccination affect my daughter's fertility?

HPV vaccine does not cause fertility problems. In fact, HPV vaccination can help protect fertility by preventing problems linked to the treatment of cervical pre-cancer and cancer.

How long will the HPV vaccine last?

The HPV vaccine provides long-lasting protection. There is enough evidence to suggest that immunity given by HPV vaccination lasts well into adulthood. There is no indication that the vaccine protection lessens with time.

How do you know HPV vaccination works?

HPV vaccination works very well. In countries with high HPV vaccination rates from the start, like Australia, England, and Sweden, cervical cancer cases have already decreased significantly. HPV vaccination can prevent most cervical cancers.

Can children wait to get the vaccine until marriage?

Many vaccines are given at younger ages to protect from future diseases. The HPV vaccine helps prevent HPV cancers in the future and works best when given between ages 9-14.

Why do children need HPV vaccination at such a young age?

HPV vaccination works best when given before age 15 because children develop stronger protection against infection when given the vaccine at younger ages and have not yet been exposed to the virus. Research shows that on-time vaccination provides more protection from HPV cancers than vaccination at older ages.

Would you give HPV vaccine to your child ?

Yes, I vaccinated my daughter (or granddaughter) because I wanted to help protect her from cancer in her future.

OR

If I had a daughter/son I would vaccinate them to help protect them from HPV cancers in their future.

SOURCES

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**For more information about the
HPV Vaccine, contact your nearest health facility**



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