

NHS

HPV

— vaccination —

Protecting against HPV infection to
help reduce your risk of cancer



arm
against
cancer



The universal HPV

immunisation programme

More than 280 million doses of the HPV vaccine have been given worldwide, including 120 million doses in the US and over 10 million in the UK. The HPV vaccine has been offered to all girls in school year 8 since September 2008. From September 2019 the vaccine has also been offered to year 8 boys.

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

The HPV vaccine helps protect you from being infected by the human papillomavirus (HPV).

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

- cervical cancer
- some mouth and throat cancers
- some cancers of the anus and genital areas

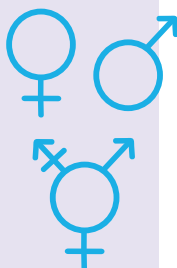
The HPV vaccine does not protect against other sexually transmitted infections.

HPV and how it spreads

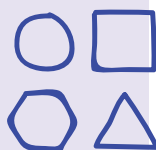
HPV infection is very common. More than 70% of unvaccinated people will get it

70%

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 whilst others cause genital warts



What difference has the HPV vaccine made so far?

Over 80 million people have received the vaccine worldwide.

In time it is expected that the vaccine will save hundreds of lives every year in the UK. A recent Scottish study has already shown a 71% reduction in pre-cancerous cervical disease in young women.

Ten years since the start of the vaccination programme in the UK there has been a big decline in HPV infections and in the number of young people with genital warts.

Having the HPV vaccine

The vaccine is given in your arm and you need 2 doses to be fully protected.

The first injection is given in year 8 and the second one usually 6 to 12 months later. You will be informed when you are due the second dose.



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.



The HPV vaccine

Gardasil has been the HPV vaccine used in the [NHS vaccination schedule](#) since 2012.

Sometime during the 2021 to 2022 academic year the HPV vaccine used in the programme will switch to Gardasil 9.

[Gardasil 9](#) can be given for the first and second dose or to complete a course that was previously started with Gardasil.

I missed my vaccination, can I still have it?

Yes. If you missed either of your vaccinations at school, you should try and catch-up as soon as possible. Contact your school nurse, school immunisation team or GP practice to arrange an appointment. You remain eligible to receive the vaccine up until your 25th birthday.



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

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

The vaccines will prevent up to 90% of cervical cancer cases, but women should still attend for cervical screening when invited to do so.

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.



For more information about possible side effects of the vaccine or to see the patient information leaflet for the vaccine, visit www.nhs.uk/hpv

Remember



to get your 2 doses of HPV vaccine at least 6 months apart



to get your HPV vaccine now, to protect yourself against a number of cancers in the future



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

For more information, visit www.nhs.uk/hpv

A complete list of ingredients for the Gardasil vaccine is given in the Patient Information Leaflet (PIL): www.medicines.org.uk/emc/medicine/19033

A complete list of ingredients for the Gardasil 9 vaccine is given in the Patient Information Leaflet (PIL): www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/7330/pil

The Summary of Product Characteristics (SPC): www.medicines.org.uk/emc/search?q=gardasil



This leaflet has been produced by the UK Health Security Agency. **Immunisation, helping to protect everyone at every age.**