HPV (Human Papillomavirus) Vaccine: *What You Need to Know*

Many Vaccine Information Statements are available in Spanish and other languages. See www.immunize.org/vis

Hojas de información sobre vacunas están disponibles en español y en muchos otros idiomas. Visite www.immunize.org/vis

1 Why get vaccinated?

HPV (Human papillomavirus) vaccine can prevent infection with some types of human papillomavirus.

HPV infections can cause certain types of cancers including:
- cervical, vaginal and vulvar cancers in women,
- penile cancer in men, and
- anal cancers in both men and women.

HPV vaccine prevents infection from the HPV types that cause over 90% of these cancers.

HPV is spread through intimate skin-to-skin or sexual contact. HPV infections are so common that nearly all men and women will get at least one type of HPV at some time in their lives.

Most HPV infections go away by themselves within 2 years. But sometimes HPV infections will last longer and can cause cancers later in life.

2 HPV vaccine

HPV vaccine is routinely recommended for adolescents at 11 or 12 years of age to ensure they are protected before they are exposed to the virus. HPV vaccine may be given beginning at age 9 years, and as late as age 45 years.

Most people older than 26 years will not benefit from HPV vaccination. Talk with your health care provider if you want more information.

Most children who get the first dose before 15 years of age need 2 doses of HPV vaccine. Anyone who gets the first dose on or after 15 years of age, and younger people with certain immunocompromising conditions, need 3 doses. Your health care provider can give you more information.

HPV vaccine may be given at the same time as other vaccines.

3 Talk with your health care provider

Tell your vaccine provider if the person getting the vaccine:
- Has had an **allergic reaction after a previous dose of HPV vaccine**, or has any **severe, life-threatening allergies**.
- Is **pregnant**.

In some cases, your health care provider may decide to postpone HPV vaccination to a future visit.

People with minor illnesses, such as a cold, may be vaccinated. People who are moderately or severely ill should usually wait until they recover before getting HPV vaccine.

Your health care provider can give you more information.

4 Risks of a vaccine reaction

- Soreness, redness, or swelling where the shot is given can happen after HPV vaccine.
- Fever or headache can happen after HPV vaccine.

People sometimes faint after medical procedures, including vaccination. Tell your provider if you feel dizzy or have vision changes or ringing in the ears.

As with any medicine, there is a very remote chance of a vaccine causing a severe allergic reaction, other serious injury, or death.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

5 What if there is a serious problem?

An allergic reaction could occur after the vaccinated person leaves the clinic. If you see signs of a severe allergic reaction (hives, swelling of the face and throat, difficulty breathing, a fast heartbeat, dizziness, or weakness), call **9-1-1** and get the person to the nearest hospital.

For other signs that concern you, call your health care provider.

Adverse reactions should be reported to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS). Your health care provider will usually file this report, or you can do it yourself. Visit the VAERS website at **www.vaers.hhs.gov** or call **1-800-822-7967**. *VAERS is only for reporting reactions, and VAERS staff do not give medical advice.*

6 The National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program

The National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (VICP) is a federal program that was created to compensate people who may have been injured by certain vaccines. Visit the VICP website at **www.hrsa.gov/vaccinecompensation** or call **1-800-338-2382** to learn about the program and about filing a claim. There is a time limit to file a claim for compensation.

7 How can I learn more?

- Ask your health care provider.
- Call your local or state health department.
- Contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):
  - Call **1-800-232-4636** (**1-800-CDC-INFO**) or
  - Visit CDC's website at **www.cdc.gov/vaccines**