



Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine (Gardasil 9)

Vaccine Information Sheet

What is human papillomavirus (HPV)?

- There are many different types of human papillomavirus (HPV), some of which cause genital warts and some of which cause cervical abnormalities and cervical, vaginal, vulvar and anal cancer as well as other cancers. It is spread through skin-to-skin contact and having oral, anal, or vaginal sex.

What is the link between HPV and cervical cancer?

- Cervical cancer affects about 1,350 Canadian women and causes ~ 380 deaths each year
- HPV infection has been shown to be the cause of cervical cancer. The types of HPV that cause cervical cancers include types 16, 18, and several other types
- Most women who have been exposed to HPV do not develop cancer of the cervix, even if the HPV is a cancer-causing type. HPV infection usually goes away on its own. However, in some women the infection can remain and slowly lead to cancer if it is not found and treated

What is the link between HPV and genital warts?

- Genital warts are caused mainly by HPV types 6 and 11

How does someone get HPV infection?

- HPV can be passed from one person to another through direct skin contact that occurs during sexual activity
- People with HPV infection may not know that they have this infection because they can have no symptoms at all. However, they can pass the infection to their sexual partners
- Depending on the type of HPV, their partners then have a chance of developing warts, cervical abnormalities or cervical cancer, or other genital cancers
- A large number of people are exposed to the HPV virus over their lifetime
- Condoms offer some protection, but the virus may be present on skin that is not covered by the condom

Are there treatment options for HPV infections?

- HPV infection usually goes away on its own
- Treatment is available for genital warts
- Pap tests will detect early abnormalities in the cervix caused by HPV. Treatment of these abnormalities can prevent cervical cancer

How can HPV and HPV-related problems be prevented?

- Abstinence is the best way to prevent HPV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- Condoms will significantly decrease the risk of getting most STIs and will help lower the chances of getting HPV infection. A condom should be used during all sexual activity.
- To prevent cervical cancer, make sure to have a regular Pap test.
- The Gardasil vaccine can protect against nine types of HPV infections – types 6, 11, 16, 18, 31, 33, 45, 52, and 58. These types cause most cervical cancers and genital warts.

How does Gardasil work?

Gardasil 9 provides nearly 100% protection against HPV types 6, 11, 16, 18, 31, 33, 45, 52, 58. HPV types 6 and 11 cause 90% of genital warts. HPV types 16 and 18 cause 70% of cervical cancers. Therefore, being vaccinated will significantly lower the chances of getting both genital warts and cervical cancer. In order to work, the vaccine must be given before the person gets the HPV infection. Gardasil is expected to provide long-term protection although booster shots may be needed in the future. Sexually active vaccinated women must continue to have regular Pap tests because the vaccine does not protect against all HPV types that cause cervical cancer.

How is Gardasil given?

Three doses of Gardasil are recommended. They should be given initially, two months later and again six months after the first dose.

Who should get Gardasil?

Gardasil is free for young women in grades 8-12. Gardasil is also recommended for females aged 9 to 45 and males aged 9 to 26 years and can be considered for those over 26.

However, only young women in grade 8-12 will receive the vaccine at no cost. All others need to pay approximately \$200.00 per dose. Gardasil is covered by some private insurance plans. Gardasil provides the best protection if given before becoming sexually active, although most sexually active women will still get very good protection from Gardasil.

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Getting the Gardasil vaccine if you are Gay, Bi, or Trans

All individuals age 9-13 years	Receive 2 doses of free Gardasil vaccine, usually in grade 7
Any individual age 14-26 years who identifies as gay, bisexual or transgender	Receive 3 doses of free Gardasil vaccine
Any individual age 27 years and older	While the vaccine is not free for these individuals and effectiveness data may be limited or not available, the vaccine should be strongly considered for individuals who identify as gay, bisexual or transgender because of their increased risk for HPV related diseases. Please see your healthcare provider for consultation.

Anyone who is immunocompromised, including individuals with HIV, should tell the nurse before receiving the vaccine.

Who should not get Gardasil?

- Girls and boys less than 9 years of age should wait until they reach 9 years of age to receive Gardasil
- Women who are or may be pregnant should not receive Gardasil. They should be vaccinated once their baby is born
- Anyone who is sick with an infection worse than a cold on the day the needle is to be given should wait until they feel better to receive the vaccine
- Anyone who has an allergic reaction to a previous dose of Gardasil or is allergic to the components of the vaccine which include yeast

If you have a bleeding disorder, please tell the nurse before receiving Gardasil.

What are the side effects I should watch for after the vaccine?

- The most common reaction to Gardasil is redness, tenderness and swelling where the shot was given. This is usually mild and goes away on its own in one to two days
- Fever, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, dizziness and headache can also occur. These are usually mild and go away on their own
- Fainting can sometimes occur after getting a needle. Be sure not to skip any meals before getting the vaccine. Tell the nurse if you are feeling faint
- Allergic reactions like hives, difficulty breathing, wheezing, or swelling of the face and mouth are rare. If these symptoms occur, **seek medical attention immediately**

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Call your health care provider if you develop any symptoms that are severe or last more than a few days.

For more information, please contact The Clinic at 519-663-5317

References:

<https://www.gardasil9.ca/>

<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/cervical-cancer>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/canadian-immunization-guide.html>

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