

# HPV, Cervical Cancer and the New HPV Vaccine



Is it right for me?  
Is it right for my daughter?

## **What is HPV?**

There are over 100 types of HPV (Human Papillomavirus)---40 of them are sexually transmitted. Some of these types of HPV cause genital warts, while others cause abnormal cell changes in the cervix, which can lead to cervical cancer.<sup>(2)</sup>

## **How common is HPV?**

HPV is a very common sexually transmitted infection among teens and adults with more than one sexual partner. Nearly 20 million Americans are currently infected with HPV and each year there are 6.2 million new cases of HPV.<sup>(4a)</sup>

## **Is there a treatment / cure for HPV?**

There is NO CURE for HPV. Treatments are directed to genital warts and the pre-cancerous or cancerous changes in the cervix.<sup>(2)</sup>

The American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology recommends that **ALL** sexually active women and **ALL** women age 21 and older have an annual gynecological exam



in addition to a Pap test to detect abnormal cell changes of the cervix.<sup>(1)</sup>  
There is no test to detect HPV related cancers in men.<sup>(2)</sup>



### **Signs and symptoms of HPV**

Both men and women may have visible symptoms such as genital warts. Women may develop internal genital warts, which are not visible. Women may also have pre-cancerous changes of the cervix, which can lead to cervical cancer.

Most people infected with sexually transmitted HPV have NO symptoms and will unknowingly transmit the HPV virus to another sexual partner.

### **How can the risk of HPV be reduced?**

Sexually transmitted types of HPV infect the skin or mucus membrane and spread by genital contact.

Condoms offer little or no protection from infection since the infected area may not be covered.<sup>(2)</sup>

Even in a long-term, mutually monogamous relationship, it is difficult to determine if a partner who has been sexually active in the past is currently infected. The only way to eliminate risk of infection is to refrain from ANY genital contact with another individual.<sup>(2)</sup>

### **HPV infection & cervical cancer**

The American Cancer Society estimates that each year about 10,000 women will develop invasive cervical cancer and about 4,000 will die from the disease.<sup>(2)</sup>

HPV has been found in 99% of all cervical cancers.<sup>(4c)</sup> HPV types 16 and 18 are associated with 70% of these cancers.

A Pap test detects pre-cancerous and cancerous conditions of the cervix, which may become life-threatening. All types of HPV can cause Pap test abnormalities. Some infections are minor and clear up on their own--others are persistent. The virus may cause no symptoms and can be unknowingly transmitted to another sexual partner.<sup>(2)</sup>



### **The new HPV vaccine**

In July 2006 the FDA approved the HPV vaccine Gardasil, by Merck, for sale and marketing to girls and women ages 9 to 26. Gardasil is given as three injections over six months and may cost \$360 or more. Insurance coverage may be limited.

Gardasil protects against 4 strains of HPV – types 16 and 18 which cause 70% of all cervical cancers and types 6 and 11 which cause 90% of all cases of genital warts.

**Gardasil WILL NOT protect against diseases caused by any of the other 36 types of sexually transmitted HPV and does not prevent all types of cervical cancer.**<sup>(3)</sup>

It is not known if this new vaccine will provide life-long protection or if a booster will be required later.

Regular cervical cancer screenings (Pap Tests) are **VITAL**---even after receiving the HPV vaccine.

### **Some things to consider...**

Since receiving FDA approval serious and sometimes life-threatening adverse reactions following the administration of Gardasil are being reported to VAERS (Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System).<sup>(5a)</sup> These reports do not prove that the adverse events being reported are caused by the vaccine, but they do provide an early warning that should be investigated.<sup>(5b)</sup>



While Gardasil was only evaluated by Merck for simultaneous injection with Hepatitis B vaccine, it is being given with 1 or more other vaccines<sup>(5a)</sup>---**although no studies have been conducted on the safety of this practice.**

While Gardasil trials excluded pregnant women, pregnancies did occur after receiving the vaccine and incidents of birth defects were reported<sup>(4b)</sup>. A pregnancy registry will track future outcomes associated with exposure to the vaccine.

### **Report vaccine adverse events to VAERS:**

24-Hour Information: 1-800-822-7967

Print online PDF form w/ directions at:

[http://vaers.hhs.gov/pdf/vaers\\_form.pdf](http://vaers.hhs.gov/pdf/vaers_form.pdf)

**Patient identity is kept confidential.**

Educational Center For Life  
Coventry Place, Suite G  
1637 W. Big Beaver Road  
Troy, MI 48084-3540  
248.816.8489

Email: [info@edcenterforlife.org](mailto:info@edcenterforlife.org)  
Web site: [www.edcenterforlife.org](http://www.edcenterforlife.org)  
Updated September 2007

\* \* \* \* \*

**Sources:**

- (1) American Social Health Association:  
HPV Fast Facts: [www.ashastd.org/learn/learn\\_hpv\\_facts.cfm](http://www.ashastd.org/learn/learn_hpv_facts.cfm)
- (2) Centers for Disease Control:  
Genital HPV Infection - CDC Fact Sheet  
[www.cdc.gov/std/HPV/STDFact-HPV.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/std/HPV/STDFact-HPV.htm)
- (3) Gardasil: [www.gardasil.com](http://www.gardasil.com)
- (4) American Cancer Society (ACS)  
[caonline.amcancersoc.org/cgi/content/full/57/1/7](http://caonline.amcancersoc.org/cgi/content/full/57/1/7)  
"American Cancer Society Guideline for Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine Use to Prevent Cervical Cancer and Its Precursors"  
4a\_Scroll down to ABSTRACT and click on  
BACKGROUND / See Incidence and Prevalence of HPV  
4b\_Scroll down to ABSTRACT and click on RATIONAL AND  
EVIDENCE FOR HPV VACCINATION / See SAFETY  
4c\_www.cancer.org (Search: FREQUENTLY ASKED  
QUESTION ABOUT HPV VACCINES)
- (5) National Vaccine Information Center: [www.nvic.org](http://www.nvic.org)  
[www.nvic.org/Diseases/HPV/HPV\\_Vaccine\\_Safety\\_Report\\_-\\_Part\\_III\\_\(081507\\_revised\)%5B1%5D.pdf](http://www.nvic.org/Diseases/HPV/HPV_Vaccine_Safety_Report_-_Part_III_(081507_revised)%5B1%5D.pdf)  
Click on HPV / See "HUMAN PAPILOMAVIRUS VACCINE SAFETY Analysis of Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System Reports: Part III" - 08/14/07 (revised 08/15/07)  
5a\_pg 11 Co-administration of Vaccines  
5b\_pg 21 Adverse Events and Co-Administration of Vaccines