



## **Gardasil**

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HPV is a sexually transmitted virus that is spread through intimate skin to skin contact from person to person. You can get it through having oral, anal or vaginal intercourse with someone who is infected. HPV can infect skin not normally covered by a condom, so using a condom does not fully protect someone from the virus. Certain types of the HPV virus can lead to cervical, vaginal and vulvar cancers in females, penile cancer in males and anal and throat cancers and genital warts in both. **HPV** is the most common **sexually transmitted infection (STI)**. **HPV** is a different virus than HIV and HSV (herpes). **HPV** is so common that nearly all sexually active men and women get it at some point in their lives.

Only 15 of the over 100 types of HPV can lead to cancer. In 2006 the first vaccine was developed to prevent four types of HPV. The newest, Gardasil 9 vaccine, protects against nine strains of HPV.

Men and women who are sexually active are most commonly infected between the ages of 15 and 25 years of age, but it may not show up right away. The best way to prevent HPV infection is to limit sexual partners and abstain from sexual intercourse until you are in a long-term committed relationship.

## **Testing**

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If you or your partner have had sex with others it is possible you have HPV and do not know it. Pap tests check for HPV in women, and if you have genital warts they can be tested for HPV. The virus may go away by itself and never cause a problem but if it doesn't, it increases risk of cancer.

## **Who should receive the vaccine?**

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It is best to get the vaccine before you are sexually active because it is more effective. Both males and females should get the vaccine between 9-26 years of age. The vaccine should be considered even if you are planning to abstain from intercourse until you are married, in case your spouse was sexually active or in the case of unplanned/unwanted intercourse.

## **Does the vaccine work if I only get 1 dose?**

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## **Who should NOT receive the vaccine?**

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If you are pregnant, you should not get the vaccine. If you had an allergic reaction to previous doses of Gardasil or Gardasil 9 vaccine, you should not get the vaccine. If you have a history of hypersensitivity to yeast you should not get the vaccine.

## **What are the side effects of the vaccine?**

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You may get mild temporary tenderness, redness or swelling at the area where you had the injection. The vaccine cost is \$339.00 per injection and insurance coverage varies by plan. You may want to contact your insurance company to find out your cost.