



Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine

Grade 7 Program

The Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine, Gardasil 9™, is being publicly funded by the Ontario Government for males and females in Grade 7. In Canada the HPV vaccine has been endorsed by the Canadian Cancer Society, Cancer Care ONT, Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada.

The vaccination is voluntary. Two separate doses, given over a specified time period are needed for complete protection. The vaccine will be administered in area schools by Registered Nurses from the Health Unit. To have your Grade 7 student protected against HPV, read the following information and complete and sign the enclosed consent form. Have your child return the completed form to his or her teacher the next day.

What is Human Papillomavirus (HPV)?

The Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is a virus with more than 130 types. Some types of HPV are common sexually transmitted infections and can lead to the development of Cancer.

HPV is linked to:

- 90% of cervical cancers
- 80–90% of anal cancers
- 40% of vaginal and vulvar cancers
- 40–50% of penile cancers
- 50%–35% of oral cavity and oropharyngeal cancers

HPV types are classified as high-risk or low-risk on their association with cancer. HPV types 16 and 18 are classified as high risk and are most commonly associated with the development of cancer. HPV types 6 and 11 are low risk, are not linked to cancer and most commonly associated with 90% of genital wart infections.

How can someone become infected with HPV?

HPV is one of the most common sexually transmitted infections. It is spread by intimate skin-to-skin contact with an infected person.

What are the symptoms of HPV infection?

People with HPV infection may not know they are infected because they have no symptoms. However, even with no

symptoms, people can pass the infection to their sexual partners. Depending on the HPV infection, infected individuals or their sexual partners may develop genital warts, cervical abnormalities, cervical or penile cancer or other genital cancers.

How is HPV infection treated?

There is no treatment for HPV infection, but there are treatments for the health problems caused by HPV, such as genital or anal warts. Regular physical examinations are very important. Early detection of HPV infections and abnormalities of the cervix and genitals can prevent the development of HPV related cancers.

How can HPV infection be prevented?

The use of condoms during sexual activity offers some protection. The virus may be present on unprotected skin. Condoms will decrease the risk of HPV infections as well as other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Gardasil 9™ can provide protection against HPV types 6, 11, 16, 18, 31, 33, 45, 52 and 58. **It is most effective if given before exposure to the virus.** The vaccine is not a replacement for regular Pap testing or physical examinations.

Is the vaccine safe?

Yes, it is publicly funded for Grade 7 boys and girls. Some people may have pain, swelling, itchiness and redness where the needle was given. Some may experience a headache, fever and nausea. Serious allergic reactions are rare but include difficulty breathing, hives and rash. See a health care provider immediately if a serious reaction occurs following vaccination.

Who should NOT get the HPV vaccine?

You should not get the HPV vaccine if you:

- Have already been fully vaccinated with Gardasil™.
- Had a bad reaction to a previous dose of the HPV vaccine.
- Have a yeast allergy.
- Are allergic to any ingredients in the vaccine (aluminum, L-histidine, polysorbate 80, sodium borate).
- Are pregnant.

Other important things you should know about the HPV vaccine:

- A booster shot may be required later in life.
- Even if your child is not sexually active there is no guarantee that a future partner will not be infected with HPV and unknowingly pass it on to him/her.
- Once sexually active, regular Pap tests are still required to screen for cervical cancer.
- Ontario now offers vaccination against cancer-causing Human Papillomavirus (HPV) free of charge to all boys and girls in Grade 7. Boys or girls in Grade 7 who are unable to begin or complete the HPV vaccine series in the current school year are eligible to catch-up missed doses through the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit, free of charge, until they finish Grade 12. Clients outside of the publicly funded schedule can see their doctor and pay to receive the vaccine. Some health insurance plans may cover the cost of the vaccine.
- Participation in the HPV Vaccine Program is voluntary. HPV Vaccination is not required for school attendance under current law in Ontario (Immunization of School Pupil's Act).

Why Grade 7?

Grade 7 was chosen because the HPV vaccine is most effective if given to males and females before they become sexually active. At the same time, students are educated about sexually transmitted infections and will better understand the benefits of the vaccine.

Record of protection

After your child receives both doses of HPV vaccine, he/she will be given a vaccination record card and instructed to give it to his/her parent or guardian for safe keeping with their other immunization records. Any vaccine your child receives through the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit will automatically be updated on their immunization record at the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit. Please notify the health unit every time your child receives vaccine anywhere else (i.e. doctors' office or travel clinic) so that the Health Unit can update their record. You can update your child's record on line at www.hnhu.org or by calling a member of the Vaccine Preventable Diseases (VPD) Team at 519-426-6170 or 905-318-6623.

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