

GET THE FACTS

HPV Vaccine



1 What is HPV?

HPV stands for Human Papillomavirus.

2 Why get vaccinated?

The HPV vaccine (Gardasil) that will be used in the Cayman Islands Programme, protects against 9 major types of HPV. These diseases include pre-cancerous lesions, cancers and genital warts in males and females.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) of the USA has approved the vaccine for use among females and males aged 9 to 25 years.

3 Is the human papillomavirus harmful?

HPV is the most common sexually transmitted infection. More than 50% of sexually active people will get HPV at some time in their lives, though most will never even know it. It is most common in people in their late teens and early 20s.

There are about 40 types of HPV that can infect the genital areas of men and women. Most HPV types cause no symptoms and go away on their own. But some types can cause pre-cancerous and cancerous lesions of the cervix, vagina and vulva, as well as genital warts. Cervical cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths among women around the world.

There is no treatment for HPV infection, although the conditions it causes can be treated.

4 Who should get the vaccine?

- The HPV vaccine is routinely recommended for girls and boys 11-12 years of age because of their robust immune systems. It can, however, be given to them as young as 9 years.

- It is important for persons to get the HPV vaccine before their first sexual contact. For these individuals, the vaccine can prevent almost 100% of disease caused by the 9 types of HPV targeted by the vaccine.
- If an individual is already infected with a type of HPV, the vaccine will not prevent disease from that type.

5 Who should NOT get the vaccine?

- Anyone who has had a severe allergic reaction to yeast or any component of the vaccine or to a previous dose of HPV vaccine should not get the HPV vaccine.
- Pregnant women should not get the vaccine since the effects of the vaccine during pregnancy are still being studied.
- People with moderate or severe acute illnesses should also defer their vaccine and schedule a new appointment.

6 Will sexually active persons benefit from the vaccine?

Ideally, persons should get the vaccine before they become sexually active. Sexually active individuals who have not been infected with any of the 9 types of HPV contained in the vaccine, would receive optimum vaccination benefit. Those who have already been infected with one or more HPV types would still get protection from the vaccine for the types they have not acquired. Few young persons are infected with all 9 HPV types in the vaccine.

7 Should girls/women be tested for the HPV or cervical cancer prior to vaccination?

No. Girls/women do not need to get an HPV test or Pap test to find out if they should get the vaccine as it is very rare that any one is infected with all nine HPV types covered by the vaccine.



HSA
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8 Will the girls/women who have been vaccinated still need a Pap test, also called "cervical cancer screening"?

Yes. Regular Pap tests are recommended as the vaccine will not provide protection against all types of HPV that cause cervical cancer.

9 Why was the 1 dose schedule recommended?

The UK JCVI and WHO has recommended a 1 dose schedule for persons 9-under 25 years, based on research validating its effectiveness when compared to the previous 2 dose schedule.

10 Is the vaccine mandatory?

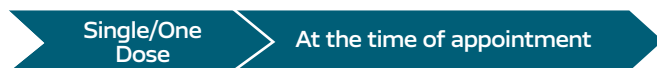
No. Persons under 18 will only be vaccinated with parental consent.

11 Are there other ways, besides the vaccine, to prevent HPV?

- The surest way to prevent genital HPV is to avoid sexual contact.
- For persons who are sexually active, condoms may lower their chances of getting HPV, if used all the time and in the right way. But HPV can infect areas that are not covered by a condom—so condoms may not fully protect against HPV.
- Chances of getting HPV can also be lowered by mutually faithful relationships and limiting partners.

12 How is the HPV vaccine given?

The vaccine is given as a single dose:



13 How long does vaccine protection last? Will a booster shot be needed?

Protection from HPV Vaccine is expected to be long lasting. More research is being done to find out if persons will need a booster vaccine.

14 How safe is the HPV vaccine?

- This vaccine has been licensed by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and approved by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) as safe and effective.
- Studies have found no serious side effects. The most common side effect is soreness in the arm (where the vaccine is given).

15 Where is the vaccine available

The HPV Vaccine will be offered to 11 to 12 year old boys and girls in year 7 High Schools. Communications will be sent to parents. No child will be vaccinated without parental consent. Parents may choose to be present at the time of the vaccination.

- The school-based program is available at no cost.
- HPV vaccine will also be available to all children ages 11-17 years by appointment at: -
 - Public Health Department – 244-2648
 - Faith Hospital, Cayman Brac – 948-2243
- Parents must accompany their children.

16 Are there any side effects to look for after vaccination?

The most common side effect is soreness in the arm (where the vaccine is given).

The common side effects at the injection site are:

- Pain (the most common side effect)
- Headache
- Itching
- Swelling
- Redness

Other Side Effects Include:

- Fever mild - mod (100 - 102° F)
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Fainting
- Abdominal pain

When these side effects do occur, in most cases they are minor, meaning they require no treatment or are easily treated by you or your healthcare provider. Paracetamol (Panadol) can be given in 4 to 6 divided doses for up to 24 hours for fever and or injection site pain.

Rare Serious Side Effects to Watch for Are:

- Signs of severe allergic reaction, including swelling of the face and or throat, difficulty breathing, hoarseness or wheezing, itching, hives, fast heartbeat, or dizziness.
- Weakness, tingling, or paralysis
- Any unusual condition, such as a high fever (103 ° F or more) or behavior changes.

If you notice any of these rare serious side effects, please call 911 or consult a Doctor immediately.

It is recommended that patients wait in the clinic for 15 minutes after getting the vaccine.

17 How do I learn more?

If you need more information, you can contact the Public Health Department by calling 244-2648 or the Cayman Islands Cancer Society at 949-7618 or visit their website at www.cics.ky.