



MASSACHUSETTS

# PROTECT YOUR CHILD’S HEALTH TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE



## Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine

The HPV vaccine provides safe and effective protection from HPV and related cancers.

### WHAT IS HPV?

HPV, or human papillomavirus, is a common infection for which there is no known treatment. Approximately four out of five people will get HPV at some point in their lifetimes.<sup>1</sup> While many HPV infections don’t cause any symptoms or serious health problems, some infections can cause cancer later in life. Nearly 80 million Americans are currently infected with some type of HPV, and about 14 million become infected each year.<sup>2</sup>

### WHO SHOULD GET VACCINATED?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that all children aged nine and older get the HPV vaccine.<sup>3</sup> According to research, younger children and pre-teens have a better immune response to the vaccine,<sup>4</sup> and are less likely to have already been exposed to HPV. Plus, the effectiveness of the vaccine doesn’t wear off over time.<sup>5</sup> Children should get vaccinated as young as possible, or else they may need three doses instead of two.

### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE HPV VACCINE?

Almost 35,000 men and women in the U.S. are diagnosed with HPV-related cancers every year.<sup>6</sup> The HPV vaccine can prevent HPV infection and almost 90% of HPV-related cancers, including head and neck cancers, and other diseases.<sup>7</sup> The vaccine is given in multiple doses, and is safe, effective, and long-lasting. It’s covered at no additional cost by your health plan.

### WHERE CAN I GET THE VACCINE?

Your child’s doctor can administer the vaccine at any time, like during a routine health checkup, or can help you find a doctor or in-network retail pharmacy\* who can provide the vaccine.

\* Please check your benefits for coverage.

## Questions?

Talk to your child’s doctor about getting your child vaccinated.

## HPV MYTHS: KNOW THE FACTS

**MYTH: HPV only affects women.**

**FACT:** Both men and women can get HPV-related cancers.<sup>8</sup>

**MYTH: The vaccine encourages sexual activity.**

**FACT:** Studies show that getting the vaccine doesn't lead to increased sexual behavior.<sup>9</sup>

**MYTH: The vaccine isn't safe.**

**FACT:** The HPV vaccine has been tested in thousands of people and continues to be monitored for safety. While it may result in minor side effects, studies have shown the vaccine to be safe and effective. It doesn't contain harmful ingredients, and it doesn't cause HPV infections, cancers, or fertility problems.<sup>5</sup>



## KEEP YOUR CHILD HEALTHY

Talk to your child's doctor about getting your child vaccinated.

1. "Take a Shot at Cancer!" American Cancer Society, accessed May 28, 2020. <https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/online-documents/en/pdf/flyers/hpv-take-a-shot-at-cancer.pdf>.
2. "About HPV (Human Papillomavirus)." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, accessed April 29, 2019. <https://www.cdc.gov/hpv/parents/about-hpv.html>.
3. "Vaccinating Boys and Girls Against HPV." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, accessed August 15, 2019. <https://www.cdc.gov/hpv/parents/vaccine.htm>.
4. "HPV Vaccines." American Cancer Society, accessed May 28, 2020. <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancer-causes/infectious-agents/hpv/hpv-vaccines.html>.
5. "HPV VACs: Just the Facts for Providers." American Cancer Society, accessed May 28, 2020. <https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/online-documents/en/pdf/flyers/hpv-vacs-just-the-facts-for-providers.pdf>.

6. "Reasons to Get Vaccinated Against HPV." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, accessed March 26, 2019. <https://www.cdc.gov/hpv/parents/vaccine/six-reasons.html>.
7. "HPV." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, accessed November 13, 2019. <https://www.cdc.gov/hpv/hcp/protecting-patients.html>.
8. "HPV Diseases and Cancers." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, accessed April 29, 2019. <https://www.cdc.gov/hpv/parents/cancer.html>.
9. "HPV Vaccines." American Sexual Health Association, accessed 2019. <http://www.ashsexualhealth.org/stds/stis/hpv/hpv-vaccines>.
10. "HPV VACs: Just the Facts for Providers." American Cancer Society, accessed May 28, 2020. <https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/online-documents/en/pdf/flyers/hpv-vacs-just-the-facts-for-providers.pdf>.

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ATTENTION: If you don't speak English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call Member Service at the number on your ID card (TTY: 711).

ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia con el idioma. Llame al número de Servicio al Cliente que figura en su tarjeta de identificación (TTY: 711).

ATENÇÃO: Se fala português, são-lhe disponibilizados gratuitamente serviços de assistência de idiomas. Telefone para os Serviços aos Membros, através do número no seu cartão ID (TTY: 711).