

Better protected with HPV vaccine

HPV VACCINATION CAMPAIGN

PREVENTING INFECTIONS AND
CANCERS

FOR BOYS AND GIRLS





WHAT IS HUMAN PAPILLOMAVIRUS (HPV)?

It is a group of very common viruses.

There are over 100 serotypes of the HPV, about 40 of which can cause infection in the genital tract of women and men.

HPV infections are usually transient and asymptomatic - the infected person does not know that he/she is infected - and in most cases they clear up on their own.

Some HPV serotypes can cause cell changes in genital mucous membranes (cervix, vulva, vagina, anus, penis and oropharynx) and if they persist and are not treated, in some cases they can develop cancer even after many years.

HOW IS HPV TRANSMITTED?

HPV is transmitted during sex, including incomplete sexual intercourse.


It is the most common sexually transmitted infection.

Condoms reduce but do not prevent transmission of the virus which could be present on other skin portions not protected by the condom.

HOW CAN HPV INFECTION BE TREATED?

There is no specific treatment for HPV infection.

To early detect cell changes in the cervix caused by HPV **it is necessary to undergo regular screening through HPV test or PAP test.** No screening programmes exist for the other sites – vulva, vagina, anus, penis and oropharynx.





IS HPV VACCINE SAFE? WHAT IS IT MADE OF?

The vaccine is safe. Due to its composition, it cannot cause the infection, but it can produce an immune response to the virus. All the studies carried out so far, as well as the post-marketing surveillance systems of all European and non-European countries have confirmed that the vaccine is well tolerated. Millions of people have been vaccinated against HPV and no serious adverse events have been reported. Common side effects include pain and redness at the site of injection, fever, nausea, dizziness, headache and joint pain. These are mild and short-lived side effects.

DOES HPV VACCINE PREVENT INFECTIONS?

The vaccine prevents infection from HPV serotypes contained in it and thus it prevents abnormal cell changes which may lead to cancer.

IS THE VACCINE EFFECTIVE?

Yes. Many clinical trials have shown that if the vaccine is administered when the person has not been exposed to the virus yet, before starting sexual activity, it gives very high protection against precancerous and cancerous lesions and genital warts. The vaccine currently used in the Emilia Romagna region is effective against 9 HPV types and protects from about 90% of cervical cancers, approx. 80% of HPV-related cancers and almost 100% of genital warts.

HOW LONG IS THE VACCINE GOOD FOR?

Studies suggest that the antibodies stay in the body for many years, probably for the whole life. As at today, no booster shot is recommended after the basic schedule.

WHO SHOULD GET VACCINATED?

The vaccine prevents the infection but doesn't treat it. Thus it should be given before a person may be potentially exposed to the virus, meaning before starting sexual activity. If a girl or boy has already had contact with the virus types contained in the vaccine, the vaccine will be less effective.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE-OF-CHARGE VACCINATION?

The Regional Health Service offers free-of-charge vaccination to all girls and boys aged 12. The local health authority of the city where the young person lives will send him/her an invitation letter for vaccination. All girls born from 1996, who were offered free-of-charge vaccination, remain entitled to free vaccination until they turn 26. Boys born from 2006 remain entitled to free vaccination until they turn 18.

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WHERE AND HOW CAN I GET VACCINATED FREE OF CHARGE?

You can get vaccinated at the vaccination offices of the local health authorities. Depending on your age, you will get two or three intramuscular injections in the deltoid region of the upper arm.

IS VACCINATION RECOMMENDED ALSO FOR ADULTS?

Clinical trials have shown that the vaccine is quite effective also in adults, although not as much as in adolescents, simply because the likelihood of contact with HPV viruses is much higher due to sexual activity.

The Regional Health Service offers vaccination also to adults and young people born before 2006 at a preferential price, if administered at the vaccination offices of the local health authorities. The price paid by users is much lower than the one applied by private centres and corresponds to the mere cost of the vaccine paid by the local health authority plus the vaccination fee applied according to the regional price list.

CAN I BE VACCINATED DURING PREGNANCY?

No. If a woman discovers she is pregnant after starting the vaccine schedule, she should wait until the end of pregnancy before completing the doses.

IF I GOT VACCINATED, SHOULD I STILL FOLLOW THE SCREENING PROGRAMME FOR CERVICAL CANCER?

Yes, because screening makes it possible to detect abnormal cell changes caused by HPV serotypes that are not contained in the vaccine.



Check the vaccination certificate in the electronic health record of your children

Fascicolo Sanitario
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MORE INFO AT
fascicolo-sanitario.it

TALK TO YOUR PAEDIATRICIAN
OR DOCTOR

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