

GARDASIL HPV VACCINE INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Gardasil is an FDA approved vaccine against human papillomavirus. Should you or your daughter consider this vaccine? Here are some facts that may help you in your decision.

FACTS ABOUT HPV

- Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a sexually transmitted virus that can cause genital warts and/or abnormal pap smears (precancerous changes or invasive cancer of the cervix)
- HPV is detectable in 99.7% of cervical cancer biopsies, and women who carry the virus for long periods of time are 100 times more likely to get cervical cancer than women who don't
- The virus is very common, with up to 80% of sexually active women exposed to the virus by age 50. It is especially common in younger women, ages 15 – 25, and intercourse is not necessary for transmission – any genital contact can result in transmitting the virus
- There are 40 strains of HPV that infect the genital tract. The “low risk” types usually cause warts but not abnormal pap smears. The “high risk” types usually cause abnormal paps, but not warts

FACTS ABOUT GARDASIL

- The vaccine prevents infection with 4 of the most common HPV types, 2 low risk and 2 high risk
- The vaccine is up to 100% effective in preventing infections from the 4 strains it covers, greatly reducing genital warts and abnormal paps in vaccinated women
- The vaccine is given as three injections over 6 months (2nd dose 2 months after the first, 3rd dose 6 months after the first)
- The vaccine is recommended for women ages 9 – 26 years, and is best administered before the onset of sexual activity
 - To date, no serious side effects have been reported over 4 years of study
 - A “booster” of this vaccine may be necessary after 5 years

OTHER QUESTIONS

What about the other types of HPV that can infect the genital tract?

The vaccine protects only for the 4 types of HPV, but these 4 types are responsible for 50-75% of HPV exposures.

What else can be done to prevent HPV infection?

Abstinence is the most effective way to prevent HPV and other sexually transmitted diseases. Condom use and limiting the number of sexual partners reduces these infections but does not prevent them.

What about individuals over age 26?

The vaccine is not currently approved under this circumstance. Some people over age 26 may elect to receive the vaccine after discussion with their health care provider.

What about boys?

The vaccine is approved for young men ages 9-26 to protect against HPV that may cause genital warts.

If I already have an abnormal pap, genital warts, or a positive HPV DNA test, is the vaccine helpful?

Yes, because it may protect you against a strain of the virus that you have not been exposed to yet.

Can I skip pap smears in the future if I get the vaccine?

NO! Strains of HPV not covered by the vaccine can cause the same problems so routine paps are still recommended

Should I get an HPV DNA test to see if I’ve been exposed before getting the vaccine?

No, as the test does not tell you which strain of HPV is present, and does not test for past infection.

Does giving the vaccine “give permission” for young people to become sexually active?

NO! There are many reasons for young people to avoid sexual activity, not just the possibility of acquiring HPV. Giving the vaccine may be a good opportunity for parents to discuss these issues with young adults.

What is the cost of the vaccine and will my insurance cover it?

Most insurance policies do cover this injection for women between the ages of 9-26, but NOT all. So it would be a good idea to double check with your insurance prior to getting this vaccine.

The codes for this vaccine are:

Procedure Code	Diagnosis Code	Estimated Charges
90649	V04.89	\$185.00*
90471	V04.89	\$40.00*

*Prices are subject to change. Please contact our office to verify.

**WE ARE AVAILABLE TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS
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