

## **HPV (Human Papillomavirus) Facts**

HPV is the most common sexually transmitted virus in the United States. More than half of the population will be infected with HPV in their lifetime. Most HPV infections don't cause any symptoms and go away on their own. HPV types 16 & 18 are included in the "high risk" group and can cause cervical cancer, abnormal and precancerous cervical lesions, and/or vaginal/vulvar lesions. Low risk types 6 & 8 can cause genital warts.

There is a vaccine for HPV and it is indicated in males and females ages 9-26. When given before exposure, the bivalent vaccine will protect against 70% of cervical cancers and the quadrivalent vaccine will also protect against the low risk virus and prevent 90% of genital warts. The treatment is a three dose series of injections given over a six-month period.

The HPV vaccine has been used in the United States and around the world for more than six years and has been found to be very safe. Any medicine can possibly cause a serious problem, but the risk of causing a serious injury or death with this vaccine is extremely small.

The HPV vaccine is one more way to help prevent health issues in the future and offers protection from the high risk viruses that are potentially cancer causing.