

The Human Papillomavirus Virus (HPV) Vaccine for Women

The **Human Papillomavirus Virus (HPV)** is spread by having sex. Many sexually active young men and women in their late teens or early 20s are infected with **HPV**. Most **HPV** infections don't have any symptoms and the infection goes away on its own. But **HPV** infection can cause cervical cancer and genital warts. Cervical cancer can sometimes lead to death.

The **HPV** vaccine protects against the 4 major types of **HPV** infection. These cause most cervical cancers and genital warts. The vaccine is recommended for girls and women 11 to 26 years old.

If you are between 11 and 26, and haven't already had the vaccine, talk with your primary care provider about getting the **HPV** vaccine.

The **HPV** vaccine is a series of 3 shots given over 6 months.

The vaccine is safe. You will not get **HPV** from the vaccine. After each shot you may have some discomfort, redness, or swelling where the needle went in, or a mild fever.

Regular screening for cervical cancer with a Pap smear is important, even if you receive the HPV vaccine. Talk with your health care team about getting screened.