



# Human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine

## About HPV

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is the most common sexually transmitted infection in the U.S. The HPV vaccine can prevent infection with these viruses, which can help prevent genital warts and certain types of cancers.

HPV can be spread through sexual activity with someone who has the virus. It can also spread through close skin-to-skin touching during sex.

If you are sexually active, you can get HPV, even if you have had sex with only one person. HPV infection is often asymptomatic, which makes it hard to know when you first contracted it and can lead to further transmission if undetected.

Boys and girls starting at age 9 should receive the HPV vaccine. Individuals may receive the HPV vaccine through 26 years of age, if unvaccinated. Individuals age 27-45 may also be vaccinated and should speak to their healthcare provider if they are at risk.

The HPV vaccine Gardasil-9 (9vHPV) is used in the U.S. and protects against 9 HPV types. The HPV vaccine can prevent cervical and oropharyngeal cancers, along with cancers of the vulva, vagina, penis, and anus.

The protection provided by HPV vaccine has not shown any waning immunity. The HPV vaccine is safe and effective and is an important cancer prevention strategy.

## Important details

CDC recommends children ages **11-12 years** get **2 doses** of HPV vaccine, 6-12 months apart

- **The first dose may be given as early as age 9.**
- Only 2 doses are needed if they are given before the child's 15th birthday.
- Children aged 9 to 14 years who received 2 doses of HPV vaccine less than 5 months apart should receive 3 doses.

Teens and young adults who start the series later, at **ages 15 to 26**, need **3 doses** of HPV vaccine.

- 3 doses of HPV vaccine are also recommended for those who have weakened immune systems.

Adults ages 27 to 45 may get the vaccine, but it is less likely to be effective, as they have probably already been exposed to HPV. These individuals should speak to their healthcare provider to determine if they should receive HPV vaccine.



# What to expect after vaccination

It's normal to experience immune response after vaccination—this is how you know the vaccine is working. Side effects are usually mild and resolve on their own within a few days. Many people who get HPV vaccine report no side effects, but some normal immune responses include:

- pain, redness, or swelling at the injection site
- fever
- dizziness
- headache
- tiredness
- nausea
- muscle or joint pain

People sometimes faint after medical procedures, including vaccination. Tell your provider if you feel dizzy or have vision changes or ringing in the ears. As with any medicine, there is a very small chance of the vaccine causing a severe allergic reaction, other serious injury, or death.

Tell the vaccination provider if the person getting the vaccine has any severe allergies.

People who should not receive the HPV vaccine include:

- those who have ever had a life-threatening allergic reaction to any ingredient in the HPV vaccine, or to a previous dose of HPV vaccine
- those who are allergic to yeast
- pregnant individuals

The HPV vaccine is safe for children who are mildly ill. People with a moderate or severe illness should wait until they are better to receive the HPV vaccine.

# HPV vaccination statistics

## More than 90%

of HPV-attributable cancers can potentially be prevented through use of the HPV vaccine

## 55.2%

of Utah adolescents have received the 2-dose HPV series as of 2022, compared to 37.4% coverage in 2017

## 13 million

new HPV infections per year in the U.S. affecting many in their late teens and early twenties

For more vaccine information, go to [immunize.utah.gov](https://immunize.utah.gov) or scan the QR code!

