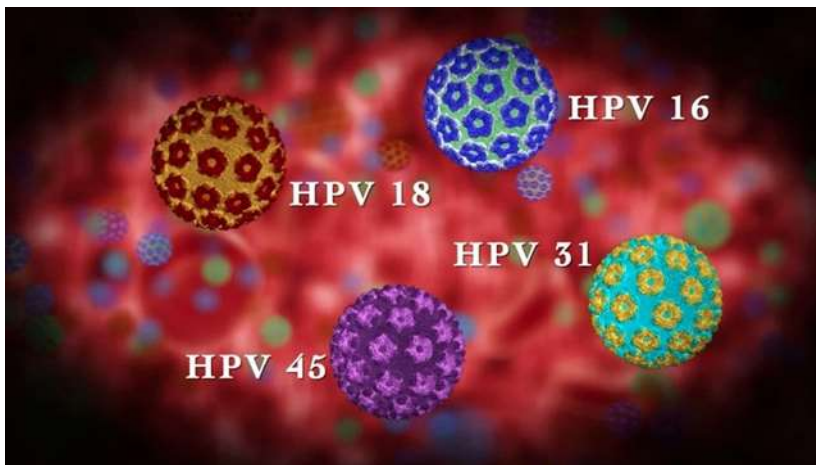


Human Papillomavirus (HPV)



Obstetrics & Gynaecology Department

What is HPV ?

Key facts

- Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a very common virus that is spread through sexual contact.
- In some cases, HPV can cause genital warts or cancer, but many people do not experience any symptoms at all.
- The virus can live in the skin for many years, and most people have HPV at some time in their lives.
- The best way to protect yourself and others against HPV is to be vaccinated.

What is human papillomavirus (HPV)?

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a very common virus that is spread through sexual contact. Most people do not experience any symptoms of HPV and the virus often goes away by itself. But in some people, HPV causes genital warts or cancer.

HPV can affect any male or female who is sexually active, even if they only experience sexual contact once. Most people have HPV at some time in their lives.

There are many different types of HPV virus some are considered 'low risk' while others are 'high risk'. Low-risk HPV types can cause genital warts and do not cause cancer.

High-risk types of HPV can cause cervical cancer or other cancers, including:

- anal cancer
- vaginal cancer
- cancer of the vulva
- cancer of the penis
- oropharyngeal cancers (cancers of the back of the throat, including the base of the tongue and tonsils)

How does HPV spread?

HPV is spread through genital to skin contact during sexual activity through tiny breaks in the skin. The virus can live in the skin for many years. It may spread to another person even if there are no visible genital warts.

How is HPV treated?

There is no treatment for HPV. The body usually gets rid of the virus by itself over time, which can take about a year. You will probably need to be re-tested to see if the virus has gone.

Can HPV be prevented?

Using condoms offers some protection, but you can still catch HPV because condoms do not cover the whole genital area.

The best way to protect yourself and others against HPV is to be vaccinated. In women, the vaccine protects against 9 types of HPV that cause cervical cancer. It does not protect against all types of HPV.

It also helps protect against genital warts and some types of vaginal, vulval and anal cancers.

In men, HPV vaccination helps protect against genital warts and some anal, penile and throat cancers.

The HPV vaccine is recommended for:

- younger people aged 9 to 25 years
- people who have weakened immune systems
- men who have sex with men

HPV Vaccine

Vaccination is your best protection against HPV. This table explains how the vaccine is given, who should get it, and whether it is on the National Immunisation Program Schedule. Some diseases can be prevented with different vaccines, so talk to your doctor about which one is appropriate for you.

What age is it recommended? 9 to 25 years.

How many doses are required? One dose.
3 doses if there are problems with your immune system.

How is it administered? Inter-mascular (IM) Injection.



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