



**HPV vaccine is a *proven* and *safe* prevention against cervical cancer and genital warts**

## Frequently asked questions

### **Why is the vaccine given to girls and boys? Why not wait until they are adults?**

*Because the vaccine has the most benefit if they receive it before they become sexually active.*

### **Can someone get the vaccine if they are sexually active?**

*Yes.*

### **How effective is the vaccine?**

*HPV vaccine prevents four types of HPV which cause 70% of cervical cancer, 90% of genital warts, 90% of anal cancer and 60% of mouth cancer.*

### **Should people be screened for HPV before they receive the vaccine?**

*HPV screening is not recommended before vaccination.*

### **Do women who have had the HPV vaccine still need cancer screening?**

*Yes, vaccinated women still need to do pap smears. The vaccine does not prevent all cervical cancer.*

### **What about men?**

*The vaccine is licensed for boys and young men. They are at risk for genital warts and for anal, penile and oropharyngeal cancer.*

### **What about pregnant women?**

*Pregnant women should wait until after delivery to be vaccinated.*

## Facts about HPV

- Human papilloma virus (HPV) is passed through sexual intercourse. It is a virus that can cause genital warts, cervical cancer, and cancers of anus, penis and oropharynx (mouth).
- At least half of sexually active women and men will get an HPV infection.
- Most HPV infections go away on their own, however, a few can cause abnormal Paps or cancer.



## How much does the HPV vaccine cost?

*HPV vaccine costs about \$120 per dose.*

## Who can get HPV vaccine free?

*The State provides free vaccine to Alaskans 9-18 years of age who are eligible for the Vaccine for Children (VFC) Program: American Indian/ Alaska Native children, Medicaid eligible and uninsured children.*

## Is the vaccine covered by insurance plans?

*Most insurance plans cover the HPV vaccine. Medicaid covers HPV vaccine for persons through 20 years old. Uninsured women 19-26 years old may be eligible for a Merck vaccine program.*



## The HPV vaccine is SAFE

- HPV vaccine was studied in thousands of teens and adults around the world.
- HPV vaccine is safe and effective.
- The most common side effect is brief soreness where the shot is given.

## Who should get the HPV vaccine?

- The vaccine is licensed and recommended for females 9-26 years of age and males 9-21 years of age.
- The best age to get the HPV vaccine is at 11-12 years of age.
- The State provides free vaccine to Alaskans 9-18 years of age who are eligible for the Vaccine for Children (VFC) Program: American Indian/ Alaska Native children, Medicaid eligible and uninsured children.



For more information:

<http://www.cdc.gov/std/hpv/common/default.htm>

Call Alaska Immunization Hotline 888-430-4321

Talk with your health provider