

www.nhsinform.scot/hpv

Get protected against
cancers caused by HPV

Academic year 21/22

NHS
SCOTLAND

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You cannot protect yourself against everything.

But you can get yourself vaccinated against the human papillomavirus (HPV), a common virus which can cause many different types of cancer.

Every young person in S1 in Scotland can get the HPV vaccine for free. Evidence is clear that the HPV vaccine helps protect both boys and girls from cancers caused by HPV.

Talk about this with your parent or carer and make sure you both sign the consent form and return it to your school, so you can get the HPV vaccine and protect yourself for the future.



HPV can cause cancers.

Protect yourself now!

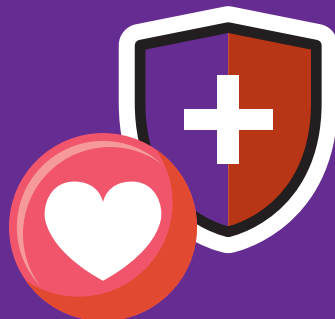
What is HPV?

HPV is a very common virus which usually has no symptoms. People probably will not even know they are carrying the virus and in most people HPV clears up quickly.

But! Carrying HPV makes you more likely to develop certain types of cancer.

It also means you can pass HPV on to others.

HPV is usually spread through intimate sexual contact. Condoms do not provide complete protection. Getting the vaccine now protects you against future risks.



There may not be immediate symptoms but HPV can lead to cancers such as:

- **head and neck cancers**
- **cervical cancer (in females)**
- **anogenital cancers (for example anal and penile (penis) cancer, cancer of the vagina and vulva)**

Head and neck cancers are most common in males, and almost 1,300 people are diagnosed each year in Scotland.



Cervical cancer can be very serious. It's also the most common cancer in women under 35 years of age in Scotland.

The HPV vaccine also protects you against over 90% of genital wart infections.

The HPV vaccine has been offered to girls in Scotland since 2008. This has reduced cancer-causing HPV in young women in Scotland by 90%. Now the vaccine is being offered to boys as well.

If the spread of HPV can be reduced even further, everyone's risk of HPV-related cancers in later life will fall.

For more information on HPV-related cancers visit www.nhsinform.scot/hpv

How do I get protected?

Every S1 pupil in Scotland can get the HPV vaccine for free.

Your school will tell you when your vaccination is due. A nurse will give you a small injection in your arm with the HPV vaccine. During vaccination strict infection prevention and control measures will be in place. To give you the best protection, you'll get two doses, usually six months to a year apart. The first dose is offered to boys and girls in S1. The second dose is usually offered in S2. If your immune system is weakened, you may need a third dose.

Anyone can catch, carry and pass on HPV.

Getting the HPV vaccine when you're offered it makes sure you're protected for your future.



Vaccination?

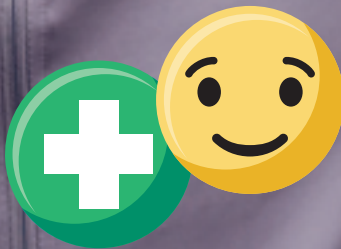
It's like my shield.





A little injection?

Worth it!



The HPV vaccine is the safest way to protect against HPV-related cancers.

The vaccine has been introduced in over 100 countries around the world. It meets the high safety standards needed for it to be used in the UK.

You can find full details on the HPV vaccine, its ingredients and side effects online at www.nhsinform.scot/hpv



Are there side effects?

The common side effects of the vaccine are quite mild.

They are mostly felt around the area of the arm where you have had the injection (soreness, swelling, redness or mild itching). If you do experience any of these side effects, they will wear off after a couple of days.

Less common side effects are headaches, nausea and fever.

Some people have an allergic reaction soon after vaccination. This reaction may be a rash or itching affecting part or all of the body. The nurse will be able to advise on this.

Very rarely, some people can have a severe reaction soon after immunisation, which causes breathing difficulties and may cause them to collapse. This is called an anaphylactic reaction. These reactions are extremely rare and nurses are fully trained to deal with them.

If you have had a severe reaction to an immunisation in the past, it's important that you include the details of this on your consent form. It's also important you let the person giving you the vaccine know on the day.



If you feel unwell after the vaccine or have a sore arm, you can take a painkiller like paracetamol or ibuprofen. Always check which painkiller is right for you and read the packaging before taking any painkillers. If you are taking a painkiller, always read the instructions on the packet carefully, including the correct dose for your age. We do not recommend that you take these medicines in advance to prevent a fever from developing.

Remember, if you are under 16 you **should not** take medicine that contains aspirin.

This information is only a guide. If you feel very unwell, seek advice from your GP or call **NHS 24** on **111**.

You can find more information on side effects and a link to the patient information leaflet online at **www.nhsinform.scot/hpv** – click ‘**The vaccine**’.



Discuss this booklet with your parent or carer. Talk to them about the risks of HPV, and the benefits of getting the vaccine at your age. It's a decision you should make together.



You should have been given a consent form with this booklet, which both you and your parent or carer will be asked to sign and return to your school. You should return the consent form to your school in advance, even if you're not going to have the vaccine. If you do not have a form, speak to your school as soon as possible.

We recommend you get agreement from your parent or carer, but it is not always necessary. For information on young people's right to consent visit **www.nhsinform.scot/consentunder16**

If you or your parent or carer have any questions about the vaccine, visit **www.nhsinform.scot/hpv**

Consent is important.

Know the facts!





**Get protected
against cervical cancer.**



Extra info for girls

Cervical cancer is the most common cancer in women under 35 and HPV is the main cause. The HPV vaccine does not protect you against all types of HPV that can cause cancer, so you'll still need to go for regular cervical screening (smear tests) when you reach 25 years of age.

You'll receive an invitation and information about cervical screening when you're older from your GP.

HPV immunisation between the ages of 11 and 13, followed by regular cervical screening when you reach 25, offers the best possible protection against cervical cancer.



Any questions?

What if I miss my immunisation?

If you miss any of your doses, for whatever reason, there will be further opportunities to get your vaccine. For example, some young people may be offered a rescheduled vaccination day the next year.

The most important thing is to have all the necessary doses as soon as they're offered at your school. If you have left school or are unsure if you've missed any vaccinations, make sure you contact your GP.

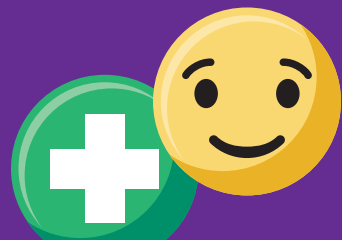
What if I've lost my consent form?

You can get another one – just speak to your school as soon as possible.

Why at this age?

The HPV vaccine works best when you're 11–13 years old, before you're ever exposed to the virus.

If you are over 15 when you have the first dose, you may need a third dose. The person giving you your vaccine will let you know how many doses you'll need.





Does this mean I cannot get cancer?

No. The HPV vaccine protects you against most, but not all, forms of HPV. Because HPV can lead to cancer, this vaccine is about reducing your risk.

I have an existing health issue, can I still get the vaccine?

If you suffer from asthma, eczema, hay fever or other allergies, you can still have the vaccine.

If your immune system is weakened due to any existing disease or treatment, you may need to have three doses regardless of your age.

If you have any questions or concerns, speak to the nurse first if you can, or your GP.

Will I be immunised against other diseases at school?

Yes. In S3 you will be offered a booster dose of the Td/IPV vaccine, which helps protect against tetanus, diphtheria and polio.

You will also be offered the MenACWY vaccine, which helps protect against meningitis. In 2021, the flu vaccine is being offered to all primary and secondary school pupils in Scotland.

You can find out more about these and other immunisations offered to young people online at www.nhsinform.scot/vaccinesforyoungpeople

The COVID-19 vaccine

Some young people are now being offered the COVID-19 vaccine. For more information visit www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccineyoungpeople

Vaccines for young people with long-term health conditions

Some young people with long-term health conditions, such as asplenia or ongoing lung, heart, kidney or liver problems, will be offered extra immunisations. These could include:

- Pneumococcal vaccine
- Meningitis B vaccine (MenB)

You can find out more about these and other immunisations offered to young people online at www.nhsinform.scot/immunisation

Visit www.nhsinform.scot/hpv to find out more about the topics covered in this leaflet as well as other sources of help and information.

Routine immunisation programme for children and young people

All immunisations are given as a single injection into the muscle of the thigh or upper arm, except rotavirus, which is given by mouth (orally), and flu, which is given as a nasal (nose) spray.

When to immunise	Diseases protected against	Vaccine given
8 weeks old	Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough), polio, Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib) and hepatitis B (HepB)	Six-in-one (DTaP/IPV/Hib/HepB)
	Rotavirus	Rotavirus
	Meningitis B (MenB)	MenB
12 weeks old	Diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio, Hib and HepB	Six-in-one (DTaP/IPV/Hib/HepB)
	Pneumococcal disease	Pneumococcal
	Rotavirus	Rotavirus
16 weeks old	Diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio, Hib and HepB	Six-in-one (DTaP/IPV/Hib/HepB)
	Meningitis B (MenB)	MenB
Between 12 and 13 months old – within a month of the first birthday	Hib and meningitis C (MenC)	Hib/MenC
	Pneumococcal disease	Pneumococcal
	Measles, mumps and rubella (German measles)	MMR
	Meningitis B (MenB)	MenB
Every year aged 2 until the end of secondary school	Influenza (flu)	Flu
3 years 4 months old or soon after	Diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough and polio	Four-in-one (DTaP/IPV or dTaP/IPV)
	Measles, mumps and rubella (German measles)	MMR (check first dose has been given)
11 to 13 years old	Cancers caused by human papillomavirus (HPV) including cervical cancer (in women) and some head and neck, and anogenital cancers (in men and women)	HPV
Around 14 years old	Tetanus, diphtheria and polio	Td/IPV, and check MMR status
	Meningitis ACWY (MenACWY)	MenACWY

www.nhsinform.scot/immunisation

Correct at the time of printing, but subject to change. For the most up-to-date timetable visit: www.nhsinform.scot/immunisation

HPV vaccine to-do list

- Talk to your parent or carer about getting the HPV vaccine and share the letter, consent form and booklet with them.
- If you have any questions, look online at **www.nhsinform.scot/hpv**
- If you still have questions talk to your GP or school nurse.
- Both you and your parent or carer should sign the consent form and then return it to your school.
- Make sure you go to school on the vaccination day. If you miss it, for whatever reason, you'll be invited to the next one.
- If you have left school or are unsure if you have missed any vaccinations, speak to your GP.



Translations



Easy read



BSL



Audio



Large print



Braille

Other formats available at:



www.nhsinform.scot/immunisation



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p hs.otherformats@p hs.scot

www.publichealthscotland.scot