

together we can fight cervical cancer

Side effects

The side effects of the immunisation are quite mild – mostly soreness in the arm that soon wears off. Clinical trials with thousands of young women have shown that the vaccine is very safe. You cannot get HPV infection from the vaccine.

Some people have an allergic reaction soon after immunisation. This reaction may be a rash or itching affecting part or all of the body. The nurse will know how to treat 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.

Missed your appointment?

If you have missed your appointment or want more information, speak to the school nurse or your doctor.

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More information

A Q&A booklet and DVD is available at www.fightcervicalcancer.org.uk where you, your parents or carer can find more detailed information on all the topics covered in this leaflet.

To get this leaflet in another language or format, telephone your local NHS Board. If you need help to do this, contact the free **NHS Helpline on 0800 22 44 88 (Textphone 18001 0800 22 44 88)**.

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All you need to know about the HPV vaccine that reduces the risk of cervical cancer

Information for girls aged 12 and 13 (S2)



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protect you in the future.

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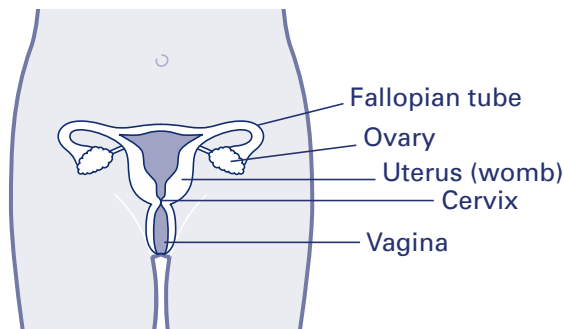
The essential guide to the HPV vaccine

This leaflet is about the immunisation (injection) that you can have now to protect you against cervical cancer when you get older. If you would like more information, go to www.fightcervicalcancer.org.uk or call the free NHS Helpline on 0800 22 44 88 (Textphone 18001 0800 22 44 88).

Cervical cancer

Cervical cancer occurs in the cervix, the entrance to the womb (see Figure A). It is caused by a virus called the **Human Papilloma Virus** or **HPV**. In the UK, around 1,000 women die from cervical cancer each year.

Figure A



How HPV causes cervical cancer

There are over 100 types of HPV, but only some can cause cervical cancer. HPV is spread by intimate skin-to-skin contact during sexual activity. Although you may not be at risk at the moment, HPV is very common and easily spread through sexual activity.

Most girls and women will be infected with HPV at some point in their lives without knowing it, as there are usually no symptoms. Most of the time, the virus does not cause cancer because the body's immune system clears it up, but not always. This is why the vaccine is so important.

The HPV vaccine

The HPV vaccine is designed to protect against the two types of HPV that can cause 70% of the cases of cervical cancer. It is important that you get this protection early enough to be effective, and the best time for this is in your early teenage years.

The vaccine does not protect you against all other types of HPV, so you will still need to start going for regular cervical screening when you're 20 years old. This combination of immunisation and cervical screening offers the best possible protection against cervical cancer. The vaccine won't protect you against other sexually transmitted infections.

Having the immunisation

You will need three injections over a period of six months to get the best protection.

You will be informed when your immunisation is due. The school nurse will give you the injection in your upper arm. Make sure you have your breakfast on the morning of your immunisation, and if possible wear a short-sleeved or loose-fitting top.

If you suffer from asthma, eczema, hay fever or other allergies, you can still have the vaccine. If you have any concerns, speak to the nurse or your doctor.

Can my older sister have the immunisation?

Yes. Older girls who were born on or after 1 September 1990 are also being offered the vaccine through a catch-up campaign – see www.fightcervicalcancer.org.uk for details.

Consent

You should have been given a consent form with this leaflet and a Q&A booklet in school. You and your parents, or carer, should discuss the information in this leaflet before agreeing to have the immunisation. Your parents are being asked to sign the consent form.

Parental agreement is always advised, although it is not always necessary. If you, or your parents, have any questions about having the immunisation please speak to your nurse or doctor. Having the immunisation now will protect you against the most common causes of cervical cancer for many years.

Getting the vaccine now will protect you in the future.