

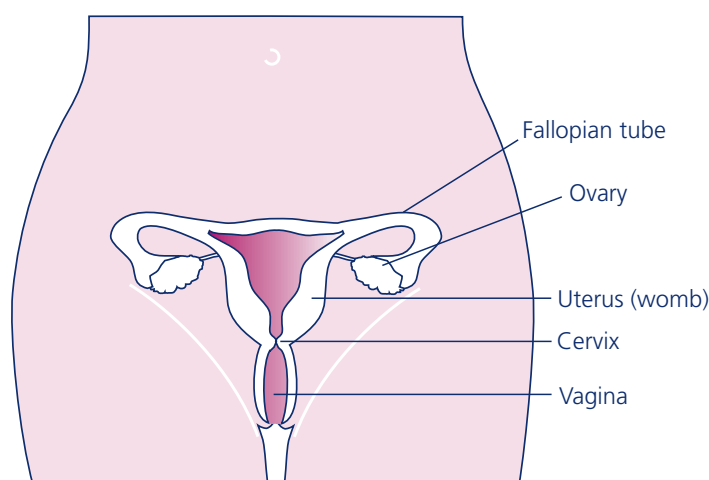
Questions and Answers about the HPV jab

Information for parents and carers

This leaflet is for parents and carers of girls born on or after 1 September 1990, who are being offered the HPV immunisation. It is about the injection (jab) that can help protect your daughter against cervical cancer when she is older.



What is cervical cancer?



Cervical cancer is a serious disease. In the UK, around 1,000 women die from cervical cancer every year. The cancer develops in the woman's cervix. This is inside her body and is part of her womb. Cervical cancer is caused by the Human Papilloma Virus, or HPV for short.



How does the virus cause cancer?

Some types of HPV can damage the cells in the cervix. If HPV gets into the cervix, it can stay for many years without causing your daughter any harm. Sometimes, it may start to cause damage. If this damage is not treated, it can turn into cancer. Women aged 20 and over should have a cervical smear test every 3 years to find out if there are any damaged cells. If the doctor finds damaged cells early enough, treatment can stop the cancer.

Even if your daughter gets the HPV jab, she should still start going for regular cervical smear tests when she is 20 years old.

How can my daughter get HPV?



Your daughter can get HPV by having sex with someone, or even just by touching the genitals (private parts) of someone who already has the virus. Most girls and women who get HPV will be okay because it will usually go away by itself. But if it does not go away by itself, some women will get cervical cancer from HPV. That is why the HPV jab is so important.

What will the jab do?

The jab will stop women catching the 2 types of HPV that cause most cases of cervical cancer.

It will not stop women catching other types of HPV, so your daughter will still need to go for cervical smear tests when she is older. The jab will not protect your daughter from other sexual infections. It will not stop your daughter from getting pregnant. If you have

any questions, you, or your daughter, should speak to your nurse or doctor.



How long does the jab last for?

The jab will protect your daughter from HPV for a long time.

What age do girls get the jab?

Girls usually get the jab when they are in the 2nd year of secondary school, around 12 or 13 years old. Older girls who are in secondary school or who have left school, and were born on or after 1 September 1990, will also be offered the jab.

When will my daughter get the jab?

Your daughter will be given details at school. If your daughter is home educated, or if you have an older daughter who has left school and was born on or after 1 September 1990, her local NHS will write to her.

How many jabs will my daughter get?

She will get 3 jabs in the top of her arm. She will not get these at the same time. Your daughter will get 3 separate jabs over 6 months to give her the best protection.



Why should my daughter get the jab now?

Giving the jab to teenage girls is the best way of helping to protect all young women against getting cervical cancer when they are older. Even if your daughter has the jab, she should still start going for regular cervical smear tests when she is 20. Your daughter will get the best protection from cervical cancer if she gets the jab now and goes for regular cervical smear tests when she is older.

Will there be any side effects?

Some girls will get mild side effects, like a sore arm for a short while. The jab has been given to thousands of young women and this has shown the jab is very safe. Your daughter cannot catch HPV from the jab. If your daughter feels ill after the jab, she should speak to a nurse or doctor.

My daughter takes medicine. Can she still have the jab?

- ✓ Yes, even if your daughter is taking medicine, she can still have the jab.

My daughter has an illness. Can she still have the jab?

- ✓ Yes, even if your daughter has an illness, she can still have the jab.

My daughter has allergies. Can she still have the jab?

- ✓ Yes, even if your daughter has allergies she can still have the jab. But your daughter should tell the nurse if she has been allergic to a jab before.

Before your daughter gets the jab, the nurse will ask her about allergies and illnesses and about any medicine she takes. If your daughter is worried, she can speak to the nurse.

Is anyone allergic to the jab?

Some people may be allergic to the jab. They may get a rash or itchy skin. Rarely, a girl may have a serious and sudden allergic reaction called anaphylaxis, where she finds it hard to breathe. This is very unlikely to happen, but if it does, the nurse knows what to do. If your daughter has been allergic to a jab before, she should speak to a nurse or doctor.



What if my daughter misses a jab?

It is important to have all 3 jabs. If your daughter misses a jab, the nurse will give it to her another time.

What if my daughter does not want to have the jab?

It is up to your daughter to decide. The NHS says that all girls in Scotland should have the jab so that they are protected from the HPV that causes cervical cancer. If your daughter has the jab now it will protect her for many years. If your daughter needs more information before she decides, she can talk to a nurse or doctor. You can also speak to a nurse or doctor.

What if my daughter wants to have the jab but I do not want her to?

It is better if you and your daughter talk about the jab and make a decision together. The law says that a girl under 16 years of age can decide about her own medical treatment. But a nurse or doctor must agree that the girl understands what she is making a decision about. For more information about this, call the NHS Helpline on 0800 22 44 88 and ask for the 'Consent – your rights' leaflet, or visit www.hris.org.uk

What if my daughter has had sex already?

✓ Even if your daughter has already had sex, she should still have the jab.

What if my daughter is pregnant?

! It is better for your daughter to wait until after her pregnancy before she has the jab. If your daughter thinks she could be pregnant, she must tell the nurse or doctor.

Why do boys not get the jab?

The reason for the jab is to protect against cervical cancer. This type of cancer only affects women.



How do I find out more about the jab?

Speak to your nurse or doctor. Call the free **NHS Helpline** on **0800 22 44 88**. (Textphone **18001 0800 22 44 88**).

Go to www.fightcervicalcancer.org.uk for more information or to watch a DVD.

Other booklets you might like to read are called:

Keep yourself healthy: a guide to having a smear test.
Keep yourself healthy: do I need a smear test?

For your free copy, please call NHS Health Scotland on **0131 536 5500** or visit:

www.healthscotland.com/uploads/documents/2869-guidetohavingasmear.may06.pdf
www.healthscotland.com/uploads/documents/9929-DoINeedASmearTest.pdf

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