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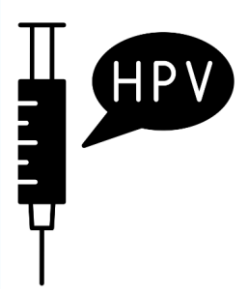

Improving human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine uptake

Information and resources for dental practice

Contents

This toolkit aims to provide health professionals with information and resources on HPV vaccination that can be used to improve local uptake and help prevent HPV-related cancers and diseases

- Introduction to the HPV vaccine
- Benefits of HPV vaccination
- Who is eligible for HPV vaccination?
- How can dental practices help?



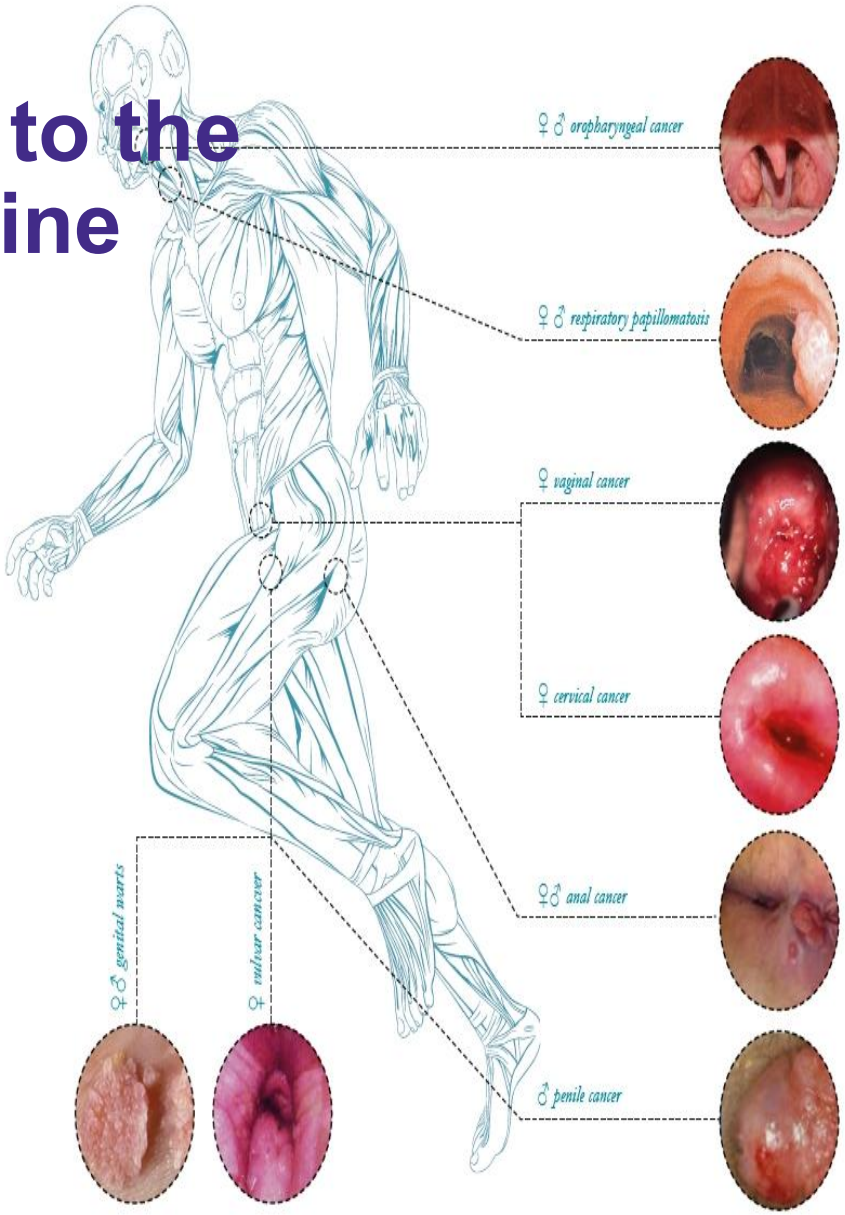
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Introduction to the HPV vaccine

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a very common sexually transmitted virus that usually causes no symptoms. There are over 100 types of HPV; while some cause warts and verrucae, certain high-risk types can alter DNA and increase the risk of cancers such as cervical, oral, throat, anal, penile, vulval and vaginal cancers.

The NHS introduced routine HPV vaccination for school-age girls in 2008, extended it to boys in 2019, and added a programme for gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men (GBMSM) in 2018.

The vaccine used, Gardasil 9, protects against nine HPV types, helping to prevent several cancers and genital warts. For most people, a single dose of the HPV vaccine now provides sufficient protection.



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Image courtesy of HPV world: Spectrum of HPV related diseases

Benefits of HPV vaccination

Vaccination against HPV has proven effective in reducing the rates of cervical cancer (UK Health Security Agency). A 2021 study found that cervical cancer rates were reduced by almost 90% in women in their 20s in England, who were offered the vaccine aged 12-13 (Falcaro et al. 2021).

Additionally, it is one of the key pillars alongside cervical screening and pre-cancer treatment to help achieve the NHS ambition to eliminate cervical cancer by 2040.

Other benefits include:

- 🛡️ Prevention of HPV-related cancers (anal, penile, oropharyngeal, vulval, and vaginal)
- 🚫 Reduction in genital warts
- 👥 Herd immunity (reducing overall circulation rates of HPV in the community)
- ❌ Prevention of transmission
- 🫁 Protection against recurrent respiratory papillomatosis
- 💷 Cost-effectiveness (reducing the burden of HPV-related diseases)

Who is eligible for HPV vaccination and where to get it?

Cohort	Eligible population	Where to get the vaccine
Cohort 1	Children aged 12 to 13 (school year 8) and catch-up opportunities until end of year 11	Secondary school (or community clinics for those not in school) via the **school-age immunisation service.**
Cohort 2	Girls up to 25 years and boys born after 1 September 2006 up to their 25th birthday who remain unvaccinated on leaving school	Via the school-age immunisation service, **GP surgery or Sexual health clinic.**
Cohort 3	Gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men (GBMSM up to 46th birthday) not previously vaccinated	Sexual health clinic or HIV clinic*

*The HPV vaccine is also sometimes recommended for other people at higher risk from HPV, such as:

- any transgender people who are felt to have the same risk as men who have sex with men
- sex workers
- people with HIV

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How can dental practices help?

🎯 National ambition is 90% HPV vaccination coverage before leaving school. However, vaccination rates remain below target and have not fully recovered following the pandemic.

You can help by:

1. Asking patients in eligible cohorts if they have had their HPV vaccine and sign posting to school immunisation team, GP practice or sexual health clinic.

2. Signposting patients to further information on HPV vaccination at Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine - Cancer Matters Wessex

3. Display promotional material in practice, on websites or social media, Access the full HPV catch-up campaign toolkit from NHS England here. Contact wessexcanceralliance@wca.uhs.nhs.uk for hard copies of posters or HPV information cards for patients.

Further information

- The HPV vaccine | Cancer Research UK
- HPV universal vaccination: factsheets for health professionals - GOV.UK
- HPV Vaccine (Human Papillomavirus Vaccine) | Vaccine Knowledge Project
- Human papillomavirus (HPV): the green book, chapter 18a - GOV.UK
- Cervical cancer mortality trends following HPV vaccination in England, 2001–24: an analysis of population-based mortality data - The Lancet

Thank you for your support

Together we can raise awareness of the benefits of having the HPV vaccine.

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