

# Vaccine Preventable Disease

## HPV Vaccine Fact Sheet

Grade 8  
September 2010



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*together*

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine is now publicly funded for females in Grade 8. This vaccine can effectively reduce genital HPV infections and the cancers they cause.

### What is Human Papillomavirus (HPV)?

HPV is a virus that affects the genital areas of men and women. People with HPV infection may not know that they have an infection because they may not have any symptoms. However, they can still pass the infection. HPV infections can lead to cervical cancer.

### What is cervical cancer?

Cervical cancer is cancer that starts in the cervix, which is the lower portion of a woman's womb or uterus. The types of HPV that cause cervical cancers include types 16, 18 and several others. In Ontario, 10 women are diagnosed with and three die from cervical cancer each week.

The Gardasil vaccine does not replace Pap tests, but is a new and important option to help prevent cancer of the cervix.

### What does the HPV vaccine do?

HPV virus causes 70 per cent of cervical cancers. Studies have found the vaccine to be almost 100% effective in preventing diseases caused by the four HPV types covered by the vaccine – including precancers of the cervix, vulva and vagina.

### Why give the vaccine to younger girls?

Ideally, the vaccine is most effective in girls/women who have not yet been infected with any of the four HPV types covered by the vaccine.

### Does the HPV vaccine have any side effects?

Serious side effects are rare. Mild pain, swelling and redness for a few days are common at the spot where the vaccine is given. Some people experience a fever, lose their appetite, are achy or drowsy for a day or two after the vaccination. Side effects usually go away on their own in one to two days. Putting ice on the site and/or using acetaminophen can help minimize pain, swelling and/or fever.

More severe reactions are rare. If your child has a more serious reaction, including trouble breathing, swelling of the mouth or face, hives, a rash, seizure/convulsion, or a fever over 39 °C lasting longer than four days, see a doctor and report it to the Health Unit.

### Who should get the HPV vaccine?

The vaccine is publicly funded for females presently in Grade 8.

### Who should not get the HPV vaccine?

You should not get the HPV vaccine if:

- You have had a past allergic reaction to aluminum, polysorbate and sodium borate.
- You have a fever or anything more serious than a minor cold, you should wait until you are feeling better.

### For more information, contact:

Huron County Health Unit  
77722B London Rd., Clinton, ON N0M 1L0  
519-482-3416 1-877-837-6143  
[www.huroncounty.ca/health](http://www.huroncounty.ca/health)

### Information for students

On the day of the clinic:

- Make sure you eat a healthy breakfast and lunch.
- Wear loose short sleeves or loose fitting tops to ensure the upper arm can be easily exposed for injection.

Just before you get the vaccine:

- Keep a positive attitude.
- Relax your arm. This makes the immunization less painful.
- Don't look when the nurse gives the injection.
- Keep very still. Don't move or jerk your arm.
- When you finish, give yourself a pat on the back.

Just after you get the vaccine:

- Use your arm as you would normally.
- Remain on school property for 15 minutes in case you have any type of reaction.
- If your arm becomes a bit red or tender after the injection, an ice pack on your arm can feel soothing.