

# The HPV Vaccine & Your Child



**A guide for parents**

**In the UK the HPV vaccine is offered to boys and girls from 12-13 years old.  
Parents and children are assured it's safe, and an effective protection against cervical cancer.  
Is it? And is it the right thing for your child? Let's look at the facts...**

### **What is HPV?**

The human papillomavirus (HPV) is a very common skin infection. It can spread through skin-to-skin contact and sexual activity.

There are more than 100 different types.

HPV does not usually cause any symptoms, and most people will have it at some point in their life.

90% of infections will be cleared by the body without any treatment.

### **Can HPV cause cancer?**

Some HPV types have been linked to cancer.

Some researchers suspect that lesions (a tissue abnormality) from 'high risk' HPV types can lead to cancer.

Direct causation has not been proven, however. The HPV virus is very prevalent, yet cervical cancer is rare.

### **How common is cervical cancer?**

In the UK, fewer than 1% of women will develop cervical cancer in their lifetime.

With early diagnosis, the 5-year relative survival rate is 91%.

Cervical cancer is very rare in the developed world.

Over 85% of new cases worldwide are in the less developed world, largely due to a lack of cervical screening.

### **What does the HPV vaccine do?**

The current UK HPV vaccine is Gardasil 9. It is designed to prevent development of lesions that might cause cancer.

It does not directly prevent cancer. The Gardasil 9 vaccine only targets nine HPV types.

### **Does the HPV vaccine prevent cancer?**

It will take decades for the true impact of the HPV vaccine on cervical cancer to be clear.

This is because the average age for a cervical cancer diagnosis is over 50, and it is a very rare condition.

Trials of Gardasil did not test for cancer prevention. Gardasil's duration of protection against HPV is not yet known.

### **Is the HPV vaccine safe?**

Since Gardasil's launch in the US, 67,155 injuries have been reported to the US Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (most vaccine injuries are never reported).

The federal compensation program has to date paid out millions for HPV vaccine injuries and death.

According to the UK government, during the first nine years of the HPV vaccine, there were 8,835 reported reactions, and over 34% were "serious".

In 2013, the Japanese government suspended its recommendation of Gardasil due to safety concerns.

In the trials of Gardasil and Gardasil 9 (used in the UK from 2021), the control groups were not given a true saline placebo.

They were instead injected with other potentially toxic substances. This approach compromised the safety data.

The Gardasil 9 package insert notes that the vaccine has never been tested for its effects on human fertility.

### **Can the risk of cervical cancer be reduced without a vaccine?**

Yes. Cervical screening is traditionally how cervical health has been monitored.

It is low-risk and estimated to prevent up to 75% of cervical cancers.

Women who have received the HPV vaccine still require regular cervical screening.

Condom use will help to protect against sexually transmitted HPV and other STDs.

Risk factors for cervical cancer include: sexual intercourse early in life, multiple sexual partners and tobacco use.

A healthy lifestyle and robust immune system are the best protection against disease and illness, so we should do all we can to help our children take care of their general health.

### **Informed consent**

If your child is being offered the HPV vaccine, we recommend spending some time researching its risks and benefits.

If you and your child decide not to go ahead, you need to make it clear to their school, in writing.

A simple template letter that both of you can sign is at:

<https://safertowait.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/HPV-vaccine-refusal-letter-for-schools.docx>

Or visit our homepage for a direct link.

**For references and further information, please visit [safertowait.com/HPV](https://safertowait.com/HPV)**

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