

# Talking to Parents about HPV Vaccine

Recommend HPV vaccination in the **same way** and on the **same day** as all adolescent vaccines. You can say, *“Now that your son is 11, he is due for vaccinations today to help protect him from meningitis, HPV cancers, and pertussis.”* Remind parents of the follow-up shots their child will need and ask them to make appointments before they leave.

**Why does my child need HPV vaccine?**

HPV vaccine is important because it prevents infections that can cause cancer. That's why we need to start the shot series today.

**Is my child really at risk for HPV?**

HPV is a very common infection in women and men that can cause cancer. Starting the vaccine series today will help protect your child from the cancers and diseases caused by HPV.

**Why do they need HPV vaccine at such a young age?**

Like all vaccines, we want to give HPV vaccine earlier rather than later. If you wait, your child may need three shots instead of two.

**I'm worried about the safety of HPV vaccine. Do you think it's safe?**

Yes, HPV vaccination is very safe. Like any medication, vaccines can cause side effects, including pain, swelling, or redness where the shot was given. That's normal for HPV vaccine too and should go away in a day or two.

Sometimes kids faint after they get shots and they could be injured if they fall from fainting. We'll protect your child by having them stay seated after the shot.

**Would you get HPV vaccine for your kids?**

Yes, I gave HPV vaccine to my child (or grandchild, etc.) when he was 11, because it's important for preventing cancer.

**Why do boys need HPV vaccine?**

HPV vaccination can help prevent future infection that can lead to cancers of the penis, anus, and back of the throat in men.

**What diseases are caused by HPV?**

Some HPV infections can cause cancer—like cancer of the cervix or in the back of the throat—but we can protect your child from these cancers in the future by getting the first HPV shot today.

**How do you know the vaccine works?**

Studies continue to prove HPV vaccination works extremely well, decreasing the number of infections and HPV precancers in young people since it has been available.

**I'm worried my child will think that getting this vaccine makes it OK to have sex.**

Studies tell us that getting HPV vaccine doesn't make kids more likely to start having sex. I recommend we give your child her first HPV shot today.

**Can HPV vaccine cause infertility in my child?**

There is no known link between HPV vaccination and the inability to have children in the future. However, women who develop an HPV precancer or cancer could require treatment that would limit their ability to have children.

**What vaccines are actually required?**

I strongly recommend each of these vaccines and so do experts at the CDC and major medical organizations. School entry requirements are developed for public health and safety, but don't always reflect the most current medical recommendations for your child's health.



U.S. Department of  
Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention

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**IS CANCER PREVENTION**