

Gardasil (HPV Vaccine)

What is HPV?

The Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) is a virus that is passed by skin to skin contact. About 20 million people in the United States are infected with this virus. People who are infected with the virus don't usually have symptoms. The virus can still be passed to others without symptoms. There are many strains of HPV. Some strains can cause genital warts and some strains can cause cervical cancer.

What is the HPV vaccine?

Gardasil is a vaccination that will protect you from several of the most common strains of genital HPV: 6, 11, 16, and 18. Strains 6 and 11 cause 90% of genital warts and strains 16 and 18 cause 70% of cervical cancers. Gardasil is a series of three vaccine injections over 6 months. It is FDA approved for women ages 9-26. It is most effective when women get the vaccine prior to having sex, but all sexually active young women should still get vaccinated.

Who should not receive the Gardasil vaccine?

- Anyone who is allergic to any of the ingredients in the vaccine.
- Anyone who has an allergic reaction after getting a dose of the vaccine.

Notify your healthcare provider if:

- You have had an allergic reaction to the vaccine
- You have a bleeding disorder and are unable to receive injections in the arm
- You have a weakened immune system due to a genetic defect, HIV infection, or medication use.
- You are pregnant or planning to become pregnant.
- You have any illness with a fever more than 100 F
- You take any medicines, even those you can buy without a prescription.

How is Gardasil given?

- Gardasil is given as an injection in the upper arm.
- Three doses of Gardasil are needed for full immunization:
 - First dose: at a date you and you healthcare provider choose
 - Second dose: 2 months after the first dose
 - Third dose: 6 months after the first dose

Side effects:

- Pain, swelling, itching, and redness at the injection site
- Fever
- Nausea
- Dizziness
- Difficulty breathing (rare)
- Contact your healthcare provider if you have severe or unusual reactions to the vaccine.