

# Spread the word, not the disease.

## What's worse than having genital or anal warts?

### Not knowing you have HPV.

Genital and anal warts are caused by some types of HPV, the most common sexually transmitted infection (STI).

In women, genital warts can appear on the vulva, urethra, cervix, vagina, anus or thighs. In men, genital warts can appear on the penis, scrotum, anus or thighs.

### Cancer can be worse

Certain types of HPV cause most cervical, anal and other genital cancers.

### The Pap test

- Its the only way to detect abnormal cells in your cervix that could lead to cervical cancer later in life. HPV is a virus that is highly contagious.
- Have a Pap test within three years of becoming sexually active.

### So what is HPV?

It stands for human papillomavirus

- HPV is a virus that is highly contagious.
- HPV can infect anyone who has ever had a sexual encounter even without penetration—it is transmitted by skin-to-skin contact.
- HPV is transmitted mainly through sexual partners that may have no signs or symptoms—you can have it and not even know it.
- Most times, HPV clears up by itself.
- Some HPV's cause genital or anal warts.
- Other HPV's cause cervical, vaginal, vulvar and anal cancers.

### How do I protect myself?

Get vaccinated against HPV.

- Vaccination has been approved for girls and women aged 9 to 26 in Canada.
- It is 100% effective in preventing the four most common kinds of HPV infection.
- These types of HPV cause 70% of cervical cancers, and 90% of genital warts.
- Many provinces are funding school-based vaccination programs for teens. If your province does not, or you are not in the recommended age group, talk to your doctor.

If you have become sexually active, or are thinking about it, **make an appointment with your doctor** for a discussion on sexual health. This may be an opportunity to chat about contraception, HPV and other STI screening, vaccination and Pap testing.