



Did your teens get “it” yet?



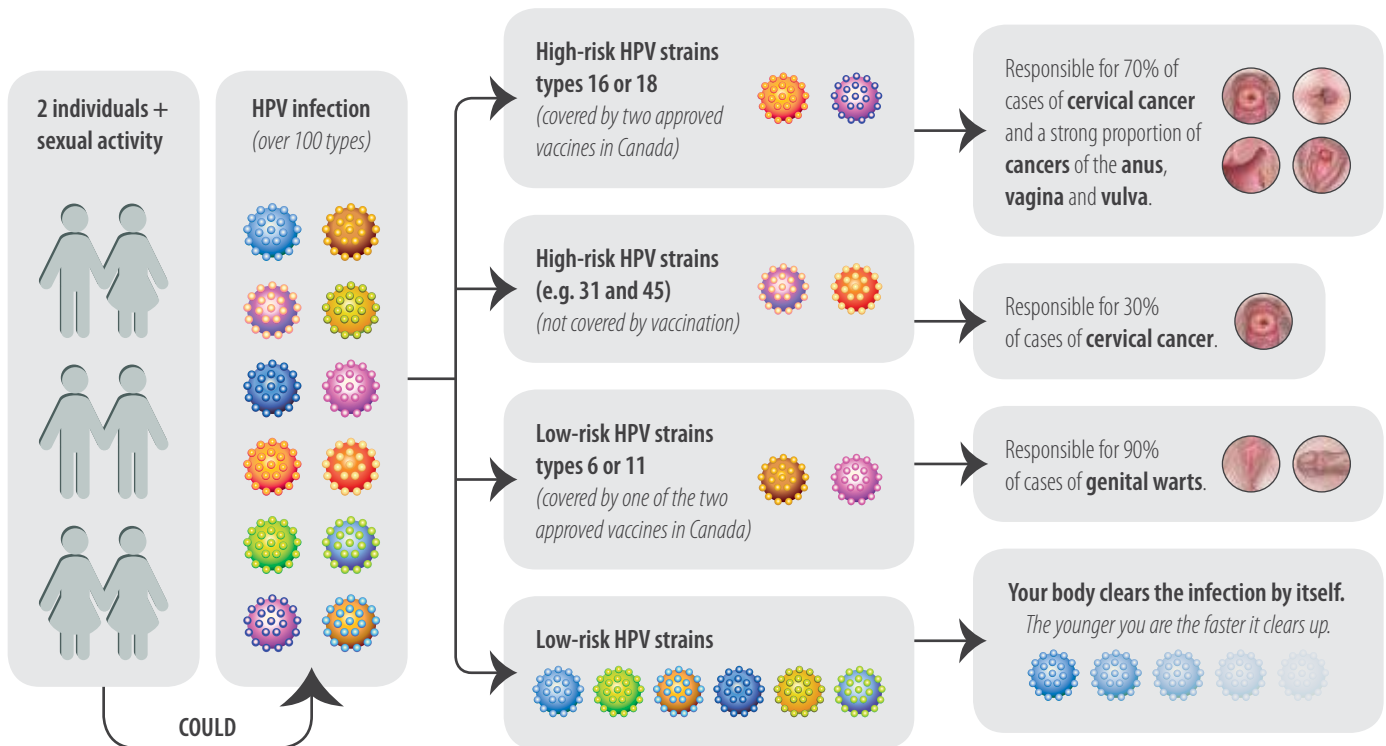
HPV Information for Parents

But they are just children...

We understand that HPV is a difficult topic for you as a parent to think about or discuss with your children, but the consequences of not doing so could be even more disconcerting. Sexuality is a fundamental component of life and strongly linked to romantic relationships; it's not surprising that most young people approach sexual activity with a combination of anticipation and anxiety. It's also not uncommon for early sexual activity to be spontaneous.

Even though your children may not be sexually active right now, someday they may be. Research has shown that 20% of students in grade 9 have had intercourse. By grade 11, the number increases to 43%.

How do you get HPV?



What you need to know about HPV

The Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a common virus that often has no signs or symptoms. There are more than 100 different types of HPV, with at least 40 that can cause cancers of the cervix, vagina, vulva, penis, anus, head and neck (mouth and throat) as well as genital warts.

HPV is an infection that spreads easily by skin-to-skin contact (penetration is not required) or during genital, anal or oral sex. The virus can be spread unknowingly by either partner, as each partner in a sexual relationship may carry the infection for many years without knowing it.



Using a condom is a good way to protect from many kinds of sexually transmitted infections (STIs). But with HPV, a condom does not provide full protection. HPV can still be contracted from infected skin not covered by the condom.

Screening

It is important for your daughter to have Pap tests. Almost all cases of cancer of the cervix have been attributed to HPV. The Pap test can detect cell changes in the cervix before they develop into cancer. *Even if your daughter has been vaccinated against HPV, make sure she has a Pap test within 3 years of becoming sexually active, or by age 21. After that, she should have a Pap test as often as her health-care professional recommends.*

Vaccination

In each stage of your child's life, you must tackle new issues, decide what is best and set new limits. Parents do all of this to keep their children safe. **Having your child vaccinated against HPV is one of those decisions which can help keep your child safe and healthy.**

Vaccination is meant to prevent HPV, not to treat or cure it, which is why it works best before your child becomes sexually active. However, your child can still be vaccinated if they are already sexually active, infected, or have had an HPV infection as they will not likely have been exposed to all the types of HPV preventable through vaccination.

Health Canada has approved HPV vaccination for females aged 9 to 45 and males aged 9 to 26. **Vaccination is 99% effective** at preventing disease from the most common types of HPV infection that cause genital warts and cancer.

Studies show that being vaccinated against HPV is safe. Over 21,000 women were vaccinated in trials before the first HPV vaccine was approved for use with the general public. Few side effects have been reported and the most common is a temporary soreness at the site of injection. The two vaccines approved in Canada do not contain any live or dead virus. **You cannot get HPV from vaccination.**

Why consider vaccination? Because...

HPV is the kind of infection that your child could get and not be aware of. Often there are no signs or symptoms.

It is likely that your child will be exposed to HPV since most HPV infections occur in young people aged 15 to 24 and **almost 8 out of 10 Canadians become infected during their lives.**



HPV spreads easily from person to person through skin-to-skin contact.

An undiagnosed HPV infection could develop into genital warts or cancer.

Each year in Canada, 400,000 women receive an abnormal Pap test result; about 1,500 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer; and almost 400 women die of this disease.

After breast cancer, cervical cancer is the second most frequent cancer in women between the ages of 20 and 44.

Teach your children about abstinence and safer sex. Make sure they know the facts so they can make good choices.

Did your teens get "it" yet?

Don't let "it" be HPV.

Get the knowledge you need.

Get the vaccination against HPV for your children.

Get your daughter to get her Pap test.

**To learn more about HPV,
visit HPVinfo.ca.**



Cancer and warts

that can be caused by HPV

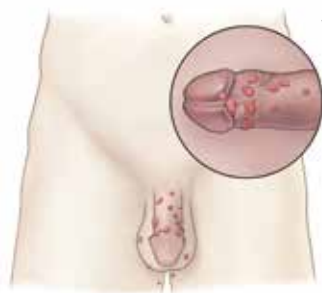


♀♂ Genital Warts

The wart that you may get on your hands or under your feet is not the type that is being referred to here. We are talking about **genital warts**. In women, they can be found on the vulva, vagina, cervix, pubis, thighs or in and around the anus. In men, they can be found on the penis, scrotum, pubis, thighs or in and around the anus.



There may be one or many warts that you can see or feel. They may look like small, red or white cauliflower. They may be flat or feel like small raised bumps. Although the warts are unsightly, most of them are painless but can sometimes cause burning or itching. Genital warts are often the only sign that someone has an HPV infection. In fact, genital warts are the most common sign of HPV in men.



Some studies have shown that 2 out of 3 people who have sexual contact with a person who has genital warts will develop genital warts within one to eight months of being exposed. These warts are considered a chronic infection, which means that once you are infected, you can develop warts at any time, for the rest of your life.

A health-care professional can remove genital warts by using chemicals, laser surgery or freezing with liquid nitrogen or can boost your immune system to develop resistance against the HPV virus. However, that does not mean that you are cured of HPV, that the warts won't return, or that you can't spread the virus to your sexual partners or newborns.

The risk of getting genital warts increases as your number of sexual partners increases, if your partners were promiscuous, or if you smoke.

The two HPV types responsible for 90% of the cases of genital warts are HPV 6 and 11.

Vaccination can help prevent the incidence of genital warts.

♀ Cervical Cancer

The cervix is the lower opening of the uterus. **Cervical cancer**, or cancer of the cervix, is almost exclusively caused by HPV and is estimated to be the second most frequent cancer in women aged 20–44 after breast cancer. In Canada, about 1,500 women are diagnosed each year and 400 die from this type of cancer.



A Pap test, or Pap smear, is a simple screening method that detects cell changes on your cervix. When abnormal cervical cells are found early, they can often be treated effectively before these changes become dangerous. If left untreated for several years, abnormal cells can develop into cervical cancer.

If the Pap test results indicate that abnormal cells were found, the first step is to have a colposcopy. This procedure allows the gynaecologist or colposcopist to examine your cervix by using a special instrument (colposcope) that shines a light on your cervix and magnifies it, like looking through binoculars.

Depending on the result, a control visit or treatment can be recommended. Should a treatment be required, your doctor may suggest cryosurgery, laser surgery or a LEEP procedure to remove the affected cells. Cryosurgery freezes cells off, laser surgery burns or vaporizes the cells off, and LEEP (Loop Electrosurgical Excision Procedure) removes the cells using a wire loop.

The four HPV types most commonly associated with cervical cancer are HPV 16, 18, 31 and 45.

Vaccination can help prevent the incidence of cervical cancer.

♀♂ Anal Cancer



Cancer of the anus is rare but increasing.

Anal cancer is similar to cervical cancer because the skin of the inside of the anus is a lot like the skin of the cervix and the skin of the outside of the anus is very similar to the skin of the vulva.

The infection can cause warts around and inside the anus. Symptoms can include anal bleeding, difficulty passing stools, pain or lumps, itching or discharge. In the presence of signs and symptoms, an intra anal examination should be performed.

In the presence of signs and symptoms of head and neck (mouth and throat) or anal cancer, a health-care professional may recommend imaging tests and biopsies. Treatments may include laser surgery, microsurgery, radiation therapy and/or chemotherapy.

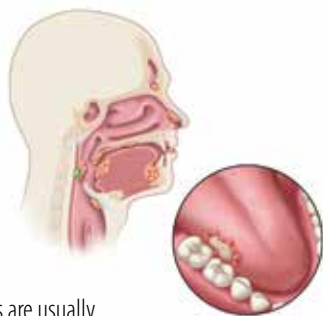
The HPV type most commonly associated with head and neck (mouth and throat) and anal cancers is HPV 16.

Vaccination can help prevent the incidence of anal cancer, but has not been clinically proven to prevent head and neck (mouth and throat) cancer.

♀♂ Head and Neck Cancer (mouth and throat)

Oral cancer is a cancer of the mouth. It commonly involves the lips and tongue and may occur on the roof or floor of the mouth, cheek lining, or gums.

Head and neck cancer includes cancer of the mouth as well as cancer of the nose, sinuses, salivary glands, throat, larynx and lymph nodes in the neck.



Head and neck (mouth and throat) cancers are usually associated with high tobacco and alcohol consumption but these numbers are going down while HPV related ones are going up. Head and neck (mouth and throat) cancers are linked with sexual behaviour including the practice of oral sex with a person infected with HPV.

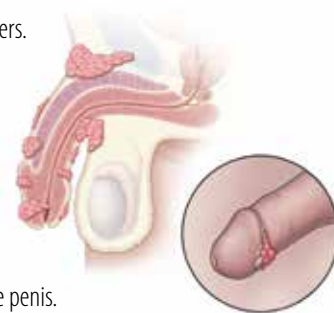
Some typical symptoms of head and neck (mouth and throat) cancers include a lump or a sore in the head and neck area that does not heal, a sore throat that does not go away, white or red patches in the mouth, difficulty swallowing, and a change or hoarseness in the voice.

♂ Penile Cancer

Men can get cancer of the penis, just as women can get vulvar and vaginal cancers.

Penile cancer is a more rare type of cancer representing less than one percent of cancers in men.

Generally, penile cancer affects the head or foreskin of the penis rather than the shaft of the penis. Signs and symptoms can be a lump or ulcer on the penis. Growths can be raised, wart-like or flat and can be painful and inflamed. There may be itching and burning in the region as well.



For vulvar, vaginal, and penile cancers, treatment varies depending on how advanced the cancer is. It might include laser surgery, microsurgery, radiation therapy, and/or chemotherapy.

The two HPV types most commonly associated with vulvar and vaginal cancers are HPV 16 and 18.

Vaccination can help prevent the incidence of vulvar and vaginal cancers, but has not been clinically proven to prevent penile cancer.

♀ Vulvar and Vaginal Cancers



The vulva is the outer part of the female genitals. It includes the opening of the vagina, the outer lips and the inner lips.

It extends upward to the clitoris and downward to the perineum.

Vulvar and vaginal cancers are more rare types of cancers representing approximately 3% of all gynaecologic cancers, but the number of

women affected is increasing. There are two types of vulvar cancer. One is associated with HPV infection and tends to occur in younger women. The other is associated with vulvar skin disease (such as lichen sclerosis) and is more frequently found in older women.



Often, there are no signs or symptoms. If there are, they can appear as itching or burning that does not go away, pain in the pelvic area, abnormal vaginal bleeding, difficulty urinating and/or painful intercourse. The Pap test does not screen for vulvar or vaginal cancers.