

side effects

The side effects of the vaccination are quite mild – usually just stinging and soreness in the arm that soon wears off. The vaccine meets the rigorous safety standards required for it to be used in the UK and other European countries.

Very rarely, some people have a reaction soon after the injection. This reaction may be a rash or itching that affects some or all of the body. The nurse will know how to treat this. It is not a reason not to have more injections for HPV or other diseases.

Even more rarely, some people can have a severe reaction soon after the immunisation which makes it difficult for them to breathe and may make them collapse. This is called an anaphylactic reaction. These are extremely rare and nurses are trained to deal with them. People recover completely with treatment, usually within a few hours.

missed your appointment?

Speak to your nurse to arrange another one. It is important that you have all three doses.

giving consent

You may be given a consent form that your parents should sign giving permission for you to have the vaccination. It's important that you return the signed form before your vaccination is due.

If your parents are not sure that you should have the vaccination you should still return the form and speak to your nurse, doctor or other healthcare professional. Having the vaccination now will help protect you against the most common causes of cervical cancer for many years.

more information

You can get more information at www.immunisation.nhs.uk/hpv where you and your parents can also download a question and answer sheet that gives more detailed information on giving consent and the other topics covered in this leaflet, or you can ask the nurse for a copy. You can also phone NHS Direct's special HPV helpline on 0845 602 3303.

immunisation
the safest way to protect your health



Text only



Immunisation Information



All you need to know about the new HPV vaccine that protects against the commonest causes of cervical cancer

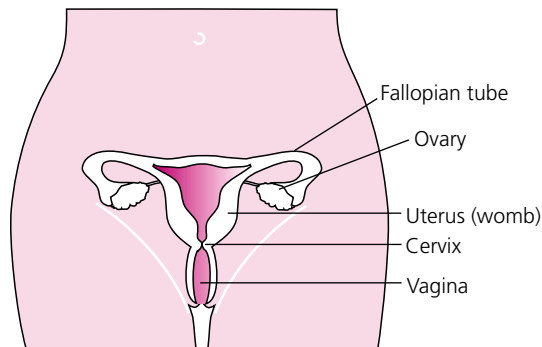
Beating cervical cancer

the essential guide to the hpv vaccination for girls aged 12 to 13

This leaflet is about the new vaccination (injection) to help protect you against cervical cancer when you get older. If you want more information, check out www.immunisation.nhs.uk/hpv

cervical cancer

Cervical cancer occurs in the cervix (the entrance to the womb – see diagram below). It is caused by a virus called the **human papillomavirus** or **HPV**. Cervical cancer can be very serious and around 1000 women die from it in the UK each year.



hpv and how it spreads

There are over 100 types of human papillomavirus but only 13 of them are known to cause cancer. The others cause conditions like genital warts (small fleshy lumps around the genital area) or are harmless. The virus is very common and you catch it by being sexually active with another person who already has the virus. Because it is so common, most people will get infected at some point in their lifetime. Most of the time, the virus does not cause cancer because it is killed off by the body's immune system, but not always – this is why the vaccine is so important.

the hpv vaccine

The vaccine protects against the two types of the virus that cause most (over 70%) of the cases of cervical cancer. It does not protect you against all of the other types, so you will still need to have cervical screening (tests) when you are older.

by having the vaccination you will reduce your risk of getting cervical cancer by over 70%

having the vaccination

You need to have the vaccination before you start being sexually active. And, while most girls don't start having sex before they're at least 16 or quite a bit older, it is recommended that you have the vaccine at 12 to 13 years of age to protect you as early as possible. Having the vaccine won't protect you against other sexually transmitted diseases like chlamydia and it won't stop you getting pregnant.

You will need three injections over several months to get the best protection. Like the vaccinations you had as a baby, some vaccines need to be given as three or more doses to work properly. The nurse will give you the vaccination in your upper arm.

Your school or health authority will contact your parents when it is time for your vaccination.

can my older sister have the vaccine too?

Yes, older school girls will be offered the vaccine over the next couple of years – see www.immunisation.nhs.uk/hpv for details.

