



Premier Care for Women

Health Care for Women by Women

HUMAN PAPILLOMAVIRUS (HPV)

What is Human Papillomavirus (HPV)?

HPV is a common virus. In 2005, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimated that 20 million people in the United States had this virus. There are many different types of HPV; some cause no harm. Others can cause diseases of the genital area. For most people the virus goes away on its own. When the virus does not go away it can develop into cervical cancer, precancerous lesions, or genital warts, depending on the HPV type.

Who is at risk for Human Papillomavirus?

In 2005, the CDC estimated that at least 50% of sexually active people are exposed to HPV during their lifetime. A male or female of any age who takes part in any kind of sexual activity that involves genital contact is at risk. Many people who have HPV may not show any signs or symptoms. This means that they can pass on the virus to others and not know it.

What are cervical cancer, precancerous lesions, and genital warts?

Cancer of the cervix is a serious disease that can be life-threatening. This disease is caused by certain HPV types that can cause the cells in the lining of the cervix to change from normal to precancerous lesions. If these are not treated, they can turn cancerous.

Genital warts are caused by different strains of HPV. They often appear as skin-colored growths. They are found on the inside or outside of the genitals. They can hurt, itch, bleed, and cause discomfort. These lesions are usually not precancerous. Sometimes, it takes multiple treatments to eliminate these lesions.

What are the HPV vaccines?

There are two types of vaccines available in our office:

GARDISIL AND CERVARIX. Both are given as injections and you will receive 3 doses of the vaccine within a 6 month time period.

Who can receive the HPV vaccination?

Girls and women 9 through 26 years of age.

Who should NOT receive the vaccinations?

Anyone who:

- is allergic to any ingredient in the vaccine.
 - an allergic reaction after getting a dose of the vaccine.
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What should I tell my health care professional before I am vaccinated?

If you:

- have an allergic reaction to the vaccine.
 - have a bleeding disorder.
 - have a weakened immune system.
 - are pregnant or planning to get pregnant.
 - have illness or fever more than 100°F
 - take or plan to take any medicines, even those you can buy over the counter.
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