

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine

Vaccination,
the best protection

April 2017

Vaccination is the best protection against infections caused by HPV and their complications. HPV types included in the vaccine are responsible for the majority of cervical cancers, cancers of the vagina, the vulva, the penis, the anus and the mouth and throat. Gardasil and Gardasil 9 also protect against infections from HPV types, which cause anal and genital warts (condylomas). Condylomas are the most frequent sexually transmissible infections in Canada. When someone is infected by an HPV, he or she often does not know because the infection goes undetected.

Disease	Signs and symptoms	Possible complications
HPV infections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anal and genital warts (approximately 14,000 cases a year in Québec) Precancerous lesions of the uterine cervix, the vagina, the vulva, the penis, the anus, the mouth or the throat if the infection persists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cervical cancer (approximately 280 cases a year in Québec) Cancers of the vagina, the vulva, the penis, the anus (rare) Cancers of the mouth and throat (approximately 230 cases a year in Québec) Death (cervical cancer causes approximately 70 deaths a year in Québec)

The vaccine

Vaccination is the best protection against HPV infections and their complications. More than one dose of the vaccine is required to obtain the best protection possible. Ideally, vaccination should be performed before the start of sexual activity.

The vaccine is indicated even for someone who has already contracted an HPV infection. In such cases, the vaccination will protect against other HPV types included in the vaccine. However, the HPV vaccine do not clear existing infections and show no therapeutic effect on already existing lesions at the time of vaccination.

Vaccinated women should continue to follow the recommendations for cervical cancer screening.

Symptoms after vaccination

Some symptoms may be caused by the vaccine (e.g. redness at the injection site). Other problems may occur by chance and are not related to the vaccine (e.g. cold, gastro, headache).

HPV vaccine is safe. Most reactions are harmless and do not last long.

Frequency	Known reactions to this vaccine	What to do
In most cases (more than 50% of people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pain at the injection site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply a cold, damp compress at the injection site. Use medication for fever or discomfort if needed. See a doctor if symptoms are severe.
Very often (less than 50% of people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redness and swelling at the injection site 	
Often (less than 10% of people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Itching at the injection site, fever 	

We recommend that you stay at the clinic for at least 15 minutes after vaccination because allergic reactions may occur. If an allergic reaction occurs, the symptoms will appear a few minutes after the vaccination. The person giving the vaccine will be able to treat this reaction immediately.

For any questions, contact the person giving the vaccine, or Info-Santé 8-1-1 or your doctor.