

March 20th, 2023

Dear Colleague,

Start Recommending HPV Vaccination at Age 9

The undersigned organizations are asking you to begin recommending HPV vaccination starting at age 9. HPV vaccination has been routinely recommended for U.S. adolescents for nearly two decades, with overwhelming evidence for safety and effectiveness. Data show that on-time HPV vaccination greatly reduces the risk of HPV infection, cervical precancer, and several studies have now demonstrated reductions in cervical cancer.¹⁻³ In the U.S., HPV infections cause over 40,000 cancers annually,⁴ and Congress listed stagnant cervical cancer survival rates and persistent disparities as one of the top three priorities for women's health in 2021. HPV vaccination can prevent cancers in future generations, yet many adolescents remain unprotected. We can do better!

The American Cancer Society set an HPV vaccine series completion goal of 80% for adolescents aged 13 by 2026 because we believe this is the best way to prevent HPV-related cancers in future generations. By starting at age 9, we have more opportunities to meet this goal. Vaccinating preteens starting at age 9 with the 9-valent HPV vaccine can vaccinate more kids which will prevent more cancers. Initiating HPV vaccination at age 9 is recommended by the American Cancer Society, American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American Cancer Society's National HPV Vaccination Roundtable. Guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices notes that HPV vaccination can be given starting at age 9 years old.

Initiating the HPV vaccine series at age 9 offers many benefits, including:

1. More adolescents start and finish the vaccine series on time
2. More time for completion of the series by age 13
3. Strong immune response to the HPV vaccine
4. Increased likelihood of vaccinating prior to first HPV exposure
5. Fewer questions about sexual activity by parents and guardians
6. Fewer requests for only vaccines that are "required" for school
7. Fewer shots per visit
8. Highly acceptable to systems, providers, and parents

We have the chance to eliminate cervical cancer as a public health threat and protect our children from other HPV-related cancers. We urge you to begin recommending HPV vaccination at age 9 to prevent more cancers.

The ACS National HPV Vaccination Roundtable, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Cancer Society, and several members have developed resources to help organizations begin recommending HPV vaccination at age 9. Some of these include:

- Evidence Summary on HPV Vaccination at Ages 9 – 12
- Core messages and communication toolboxes for providers/health systems, advocacy/parents and health departments.

- New Age 9 research included in a Special Issue of the journal *Human Vaccines & Immunotherapeutics* titled “*Initiation of the HPV vaccine series before age 11: What have we learned?*”

To access these resources and many more, please visit our [HPV Vaccination Starts at Age 9](#) page and Resource Library.

Join the members of the National HPV Vaccination Roundtable in our commitment to routinely recommending HPV vaccination starting at age 9.



References:

1. Mix JM, Van Dyne EA, Saraiya M, Hollowell BD, Thomas CC. Assessing Impact of HPV Vaccination on Cervical Cancer Incidence among Women Aged 15-29 Years in the United States, 1999-2017: An Ecologic Study. *Cancer Epidemiol Biomark Prev Publ Am Assoc Cancer Res Cosponsored Am Soc Prev Oncol*. 2021;30(1):30-37. doi:10.1158/1055-9965.EPI-20-0846
2. Brisson M, Bénard É, Drolet M, et al. Population-level impact, herd immunity, and elimination after human papillomavirus vaccination: a systematic review and meta-analysis of predictions from transmission-dynamic models. *Lancet Public Health*. 2016;1(1):e8-e17. doi:10.1016/S2468-2667(16)30001-9
3. Lei J, Ploner A, Elfström KM, et al. HPV Vaccination and the Risk of Invasive Cervical Cancer. *N Engl J Med*. 2020;383(14):1340-1348. doi:10.1056/NEJMoa1917338
4. Senkomago V, Henley SJ, Thomas CC, Mix JM, Markowitz LE, Saraiya M. Human Papillomavirus-Attributable Cancers - United States, 2012-2016. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep*. 2019;68(33):724-728. doi:10.15585/mmwr.mm6833a3