

Missed your appointment?

Don't worry, you will either be seen again in school or the school health team will contact your parents to arrange another appointment.

Remember, if you are 15 years of age or over when you get the first dose you will need to get three doses within 12 months.

"The World Health Organization strongly recommends HPV vaccine to prevent cervical cancer."

Robb Butler,
Head of Immunisation,
World Health Organization,
Europe

Giving consent

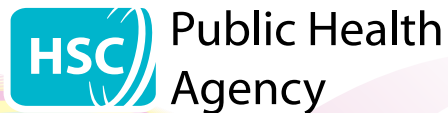
You will have been given a consent form that one of your parents should sign giving permission for you to have the vaccination. It's important that you return the signed form before your vaccination is due.

If your parents are not sure that you should have the vaccination you should still return the form and speak to your school health team or your GP. Having the vaccination now will protect you against the most common causes of cervical cancer for many years.

More information

Your parents will have received a question and answer booklet that provides more detailed information on giving consent and the other topics covered in this leaflet. This information can also be downloaded from <http://pha.site/hpv-ni>

To get the leaflet or the Q&A in another language visit <http://pha.site/hpv-ni> or ask your school nurse to print you a copy.



Public Health Agency
12-22 Linenhall Street, Belfast BT2 8BS.
Tel: 0300 555 0114 (local rate).
www.publichealth.hscni.net

Find us on:



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Beating cervical cancer

Information for girls in Year 9 and 10, aged 12-13



Help protect yourself

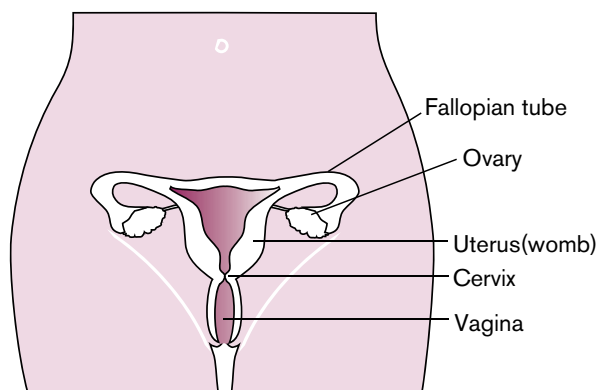
All you need to know about the HPV vaccine that protects against the commonest cause of cervical cancer

The essential guide to the HPV vaccination for girls aged 12 to 13

This leaflet is about the vaccination (injection) that you can have now to protect yourself against cervical cancer when you get older. If you want more information, check out <http://pha.site/hpv-ni>

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 900 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 virus is very common and you can catch it by being sexually active with another person who already has the virus. As much as half the population will be infected with HPV at some time in their lives. There are usually no symptoms, so many won't realise they are infected. 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 the other types of HPV, so you will still need to have cervical screening (smear tests) when you are older.

The vaccine will also protect you against the two types of HPV that cause the majority of cases of genital warts. It won't protect you against any other sexually transmitted infections and it won't stop you getting pregnant.

Having the vaccination will reduce your risk of getting cervical cancer by over 70%.

When should I have the vaccination?

You need to have the vaccination before you start being sexually active. It is recommended that you have the vaccination at 12 to 13 years of age to protect you as early as possible.

Having the vaccination

You will need two injections within 12 months to get the best protection. Like the vaccinations you had as a baby, it is important that you complete the course and have both doses for it to work properly. However, if you are 15 years of age or over when you get the first dose you will need to get three doses within 12 months.

Your school health team will arrange for you to have the vaccination in school. The nurse will give you the vaccination in your upper arm.

If you suffer from asthma, eczema, hay fever or other allergies, you can still have the vaccine. If you have any concerns about this, speak to the nurse before having the vaccine.

Side effects

The side effects of the vaccination are quite mild – usually just soreness, swelling and redness in the arm, which soon wears off. Other less common side effects may include headache, nausea, dizziness and/or mild fever. These can be treated with paracetamol or ibuprofen. 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, like a rash. The nurse will know how to treat this. It is not a reason not to have more injections for HPV or other diseases.

Severe allergic reactions are very rare and nurses are trained to deal with them. People recover completely with treatment, usually within a few hours.

Your parents can report suspected side effects of vaccines through the Yellow Card Scheme. This can be done online by visiting www.yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/ or calling 0800 731 6789 (10am to 2pm Monday-Friday only).