



HPV & THROAT CANCER

WHAT IS HPV?

The human papillomaviruses or HPVs are a group of more than 150 related viruses. More than 40 of these viruses can be easily spread through direct skin to skin contact during vaginal, anal, and oral sex.

More than half of all sexually active people contract one or more types of this virus at one time, making it the most common sexually transmitted disease in the U.S.

HOW IS THROAT CANCER LINKED TO HPV?

There are high-risk and low-risk types of HPV. The low-risk types can cause genital warts, some mouth warts, or no symptoms at all, and do not typically cause cancer. High-risk types, especially types 16 and 18, are associated with oropharyngeal cancer (cancer of the tonsils, base of tongue, and throat). Unfortunately, oropharyngeal cancer associated with HPV infection has increased dramatically over the past 30 years in young men and women without traditional risk factors, like smoking and drinking.

WHAT CAN I DO TO PROTECT MYSELF?

Consistent and correct use of condoms can reduce the transmission of HPV between sexual partners, but because there are areas not covered by a condom, infection may still occur.

VACCINATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Routine vaccination - children ages of 9-12.

Catch-up vaccination (for adults not previously vaccinated) - age 13-26. Adults age 27-45 might be eligible after a discussion with their doctor/medical provider.

Note: The FDA recently expanded indications for use of Gardasil®9 to include both men and women up to age 45.

The Gardasil®9 vaccine is safe and highly effective in preventing infections with HPV types 16 and 18. It may also prevent infection with HPV types 6 and 11 (most genital warts), as well as HPV types 31,33, 45, 52 and 58, which cause anal, cervical, vulvar and vaginal cancers. Vaccination is one of the best ways parents can prevent cancer in their children.

Regularly visit your dentist or physician. Ask that they perform an oral, head and neck exam at each visit.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- A lump in the neck
- Lump or sore in mouth or throat
- Hoarseness or change in voice
- Swallowing problems or pain
- An earache that doesn't go away
- Bleeding in the nose, mouth or throat
- Difficulty moving the tongue
- Numbness



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