

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## HPV Vaccine

### What is HPV?

HPV stands for human papillomavirus, which is a very common virus that can lead to:

- Cancers of the mouth and throat
- Cancer of the cervix
- Cancer of the penis, vagina, vulva, or anus
- Genital warts

### The HPV vaccine can prevent these!

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### Do I really need the HPV vaccine? YES!

You should get the HPV vaccine because it can prevent some types of cancers and genital warts.

### Is the HPV vaccine safe? YES!

- Millions of doses of HPV have been given without any problem.
- You may get a sore arm.
- Occasionally, a few people faint, so sit for 15 minutes after getting the shot.

### Should I get the HPV vaccine if I haven't had sex yet? YES!

- You don't have to have sex to catch HPV, but sex increases your risk.
- You can get HPV by skin-to-skin intimate contact.
- People can get and spread HPV without knowing it.
- It's best to get vaccinated before you ever have sex.

### Should I get the HPV vaccine if I've already had sex? YES!

You still need to get vaccinated even if you have had sex. The vaccine provides a lot of protection.



### When should I get the HPV vaccine?

**First dose:** between 9 and 11 years of age.

**Second dose:** 6 months after the first dose.

### Why do I need more than one shot?

You need a series of HPV vaccine shots to be fully protected.

### Why is the HPV vaccine given at an early age?

- The HPV vaccine works much better during the preteen years rather than if given later.
- Preteens who are vaccinated earlier only need two shots instead of three.
- The HPV vaccine protects children long before they are ever exposed to the virus.

