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5 Questions to Ask Before You Get the HPV Vaccine

HPV vaccines reduce your risk of all three problems caused by HPV: cervical cancer, precancer, and genital warts.

HPV spreads from one person to another by skin-to-skin contact in the genital area. HPV can spread through vaginal, anal, and oral sex. Even after you get the HPV vaccine, you can still get other types of HPV and STIs. That's why it's important to...

Practice safe (or safer) sex. That means using condoms with all sexual partners. Condoms won't protect you completely, but they are the best option aside from not having sex at all (abstinence).

Don't smoke. Smoking makes it harder for your body to fight viruses like HPV.

Get screened regularly. Have a Pap test starting 3 years after you first have sexual intercourse or by age 21. After that, have the test every year. You should have an HPV test, too, if your Pap test comes back as "inconclusive" and you are age 20 or older. Women age 30 and older should have Pap and HPV tests every 3 years if both are normal, or more often if the HPV test is positive.

Frequently Asked Questions about the HPV Vaccine

How do I know if I have HPV?

HPV is a common virus that most people have at some point in their lives. It is often spread through sexual contact. There are many different types of HPV, and some can cause cancer. The HPV vaccine can help protect against the most common types of HPV that cause cancer.

How long does the HPV vaccine last?

The HPV vaccine is designed to last for at least 10 years. However, it is not yet known if it will last for a lifetime. It is important to continue to practice safe sex and get regular checkups to monitor for HPV and other sexually transmitted infections.

The HPV vaccine is recommended for girls ages 11 to 12. It is also recommended for boys ages 11 to 12. The vaccine is given in two doses, one 6 to 12 months after the first dose. The HPV vaccine is safe and effective. It can help protect against the most common types of HPV that cause cancer. The HPV vaccine is a key part of a comprehensive approach to preventing HPV-related diseases.

Can I get HPV if I have the HPV vaccine?

The HPV vaccine does not protect against all types of HPV. It is possible to get HPV from a type of HPV that is not covered by the vaccine. However, the vaccine can help protect against the most common types of HPV that cause cancer.

Can I get HPV if I have had sex?

Yes, you can get HPV even if you have had sex. The HPV vaccine can help protect against the most common types of HPV that cause cancer, but it does not protect against all types of HPV.

How long does it take to get the HPV vaccine?

The HPV vaccine is given in two doses, one 6 to 12 months after the first dose. It is important to get the second dose on time to get the most protection from the vaccine.

How do I know if I need the HPV vaccine?

The HPV vaccine is recommended for all children ages 11 to 12. It is also recommended for young adults who have not had sex. The HPV vaccine is safe and effective. It can help protect against the most common types of HPV that cause cancer.

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