

# HOSPITALS AND CANCER CENTERS

## Vaccinate Adolescents against Cancers

### HPV VACCINATION AND CANCER

Vaccines are among the few medical interventions capable of achieving almost complete eradication of a disease. It is not often that we have an opportunity to prevent cancer, or in the case of HPV vaccination multiple cancers, with a single tool.

Nearly all cases of cervical cancer are caused by infection with high-risk types of HPV, and the virus also is linked to cancers of the vagina, vulva, anus, penis, and throat.

HPV vaccination prevents infection by virus types that cause the vast majority of these cancers and genital warts, but the vaccine works only if given well before an infection occurs. This is why, in part, the American Cancer Society recommends it at ages 11 to 12. Vaccination at younger ages has been shown to be more effective.

Despite the power of HPV vaccination to prevent cervical cancer, only one-third of adolescent girls have completed the three-dose series. The CDC reports that vaccination coverage increased slightly between 2012 and 2013 but remains too low. In 2014, the President's Cancer Panel released a report calling "underuse of HPV vaccines a serious but correctable threat to progress against cancer." <http://bit.ly/PresCancerPanelReportHPV>

### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Hospitals and cancer centers have a unique opportunity to nearly eliminate cervical cancer and greatly reduce vulvar, vaginal, penile, anal, and oropharyngeal cancers through human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination activities. As a medical care facility, there are **five simple things** you can do to prevent HPV-related cancer and help save lives.

#### Strategy 1: Make HPV vaccination a hospital- and system-wide priority.

- Host grand rounds on the importance of HPV vaccination and cancer prevention efforts.
- Educate all staff on HPV vaccination as an important tool in cancer prevention and the steps to make an effective recommendation.

#### Strategy 2: Monitor and report system-wide vaccination rates.

- Make sure your affiliated primary care physicians know their vaccination rates and set goals to get rates up. Improvement almost never happens without monitoring.
- Provide evidence-based tools to help your affiliated practices make systematic changes to improve vaccination rates and quality. Resources include *Steps for Increasing HPV Vaccination in Practice*, <http://Bit.ly/HPVStepsActionGuide>, and *AAP HPV Champion Toolkit*, <http://Bit.ly/AAPHPVChampionToolkit>.

#### Strategy 3: Engage primary care networks in HPV vaccination efforts.

- Promote training and CME opportunities that enable providers to be well versed in HPV vaccination. A quality recommendation from a provider is a key determinant of whether a patient is vaccinated.
- Encourage medical homes, ACOs, and quality incentives to impact primary care practice.

#### Strategy 4: Educate patients and administrative staff about reimbursement and local resources.

- Make sure patients and staff know that HPV vaccination is covered by most insurance plans under the Affordable Care Act, and that there is often no cost to get vaccinated – even for those who are newly insured.
- Know the resources available in your area for vaccination. The federal Vaccines for Children program provides free vaccines for uninsured and underinsured children and teens up to age 19.



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## NCI-DESIGNATED CANCER CENTERS ISSUE JOINT STATEMENT URGING HPV VACCINATION

Early in 2016, all 69 NCI-designated Cancer Centers released a consensus statement on HPV vaccination in the United States. The statement describes the continued low rates of HPV vaccination as a “serious public health threat,” and recommends that parents have their children vaccinated. It also urges clinicians “to be advocates for cancer prevention by making **strong recommendations** for childhood vaccination.”

<http://bit.ly/NCIHPVStatement>

## ASCO URGES AGGRESSIVE EFFORTS TO INCREASE HPV VACCINATION AND PREVENT CANCER

On April 11, 2016, the American Society of Clinical Oncology issued a statement to its member oncologists to help lead a push for all adolescents and young adults to be vaccinated against cervical and other HPV-related cancers. The policy statement published in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology* outlines the current barriers to HPV vaccination and recommendations to promote the uptake of the vaccine. “Oncologists have a professional obligation to help reduce the burden of cancer on patients, their families and our communities,” said Howard H. Bailey, MD, immediate past chair of ASCO’s Cancer Prevention Committee and chair of the task force that developed the policy statement.

<http://bit.ly/ASCOSTatementHPV>

### Strategy 5: Engage your administrators, primary care providers, oncologists, and survivors in HPV vaccination efforts.

- Involve oncologists, OB/GYNs, and pathologists in provider education and training to emphasize the urgency in vaccinating against HPV vaccine preventable cancers.
- Engage survivors of HPV-related cancers in community education and provider education opportunities.
- Involve interested providers and administrators in statewide HPV vaccination efforts, such as state-level HPV vaccination roundtables.
- Connect with state and/or local immunization programs, cancer control coalitions, and other coalitions focused on increasing HPV vaccination.

## FIND PARTNERS

The **HPV Vaccination Initiative Contact Map** provides contact information for various HPV vaccination organizational efforts. You can easily search this public map by state/territory, organization, and project type.

<http://Bit.ly/HPVVaccineInitiativeMap>

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The American Cancer Society hosts an HPV vaccination resource clearinghouse with over 400 resources from national organizations, including the [Society](#), [CDC](#), [AAP](#), [APA](#), [AHEC](#), [NACCHO](#), and others. Through this site you will find tools for educating providers and parents, tools for implementing quality improvement projects, and a list of CMEs, MOCs, and webinar replays.

<http://Bit.ly/HPVVACS>

## IMPLEMENT SYSTEMS CHANGE

The *Steps for Increasing HPV Vaccination in Practice: An Action Guide to Implement Evidence-based Strategies for Clinicians* document provides detailed steps and evidence-based tools to increase HPV vaccination through systems changes in the clinical setting.

<http://Bit.ly/HPVStepsActionGuide>

## NATIONAL HPV VACCINATION ROUNDTABLE

Connect to the National HPV Vaccination Roundtable to learn about the release of new resources, including survivor videos and a toolbox for school nurses to educate parents/guardians. Through the website, you can sign up for a newsletter, learn more about their member organizations and task groups, and gain access to the Survivor Speaker Database.

[www.cancer.org/hpvvaccinationroundtable](http://www.cancer.org/hpvvaccinationroundtable)

## HOW DO I FIND OUT MORE?

For General Questions | [ACS.HPV.VACs@cancer.org](mailto:ACS.HPV.VACs@cancer.org)



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**HPV VACs**  
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