

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.

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 our website on www.helpprotectyourself.info

To get the leaflet or the Q&A in another language visit our website or ask your school nurse to print you a copy.



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Beating cervical cancer

Information for girls in Year 9, aged 12-13



Help protect yourself

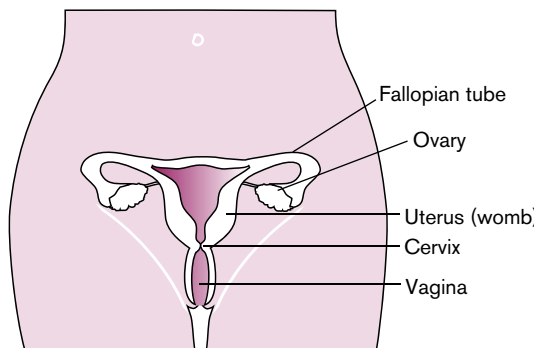
All you need to know about the HPV vaccine that protects against the commonest cause of cervical cancer

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 www.helpprotectyourself.info

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 1,000 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.

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 vaccine won't protect you against other sexually transmitted infections and it won't stop you getting pregnant.

Having the vaccination

You will need three 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 all three doses for it to work properly.

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 or if you have a severe latex allergy, speak to the nurse before having the vaccine.

Side effects

The side effects of the vaccination are quite mild – usually just stinging or soreness in the arm, which soon wears off. 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.