

The HPV vaccine: The facts.

What is the HPV vaccine?

- It's an injection (jab or jag) in your upper arm. It helps protect you from some types of human papillomavirus (HPV).
- HPV is a common virus. Most of us will have it at some point in our lives. Our body usually gets rid of it without any problems.
- Sometimes HPV can cause genital warts or some types of cancer.
- The HPV vaccine called Gardasil 9 protects you from the HPV types that cause 9 in 10 cervical cancers and 9 in 10 cases of genital warts.

Can I have the HPV vaccine at school?

- UK schools offer it to everyone age 11–13.
- You should get a leaflet about the HPV vaccine from your school. You should also get a form about agreeing to have the HPV vaccine called a 'consent form'.
- You can talk with your parent, guardian, carer or school nurse to decide if you want the HPV vaccine.
- If you think you missed the HPV vaccine when it was offered to you at school, contact your GP. You might be able to get it for free up to your 25th birthday.

Can I have the HPV vaccine after age 25?

- Some people can get it for free after age 25. This includes some gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men, people living with HIV, sex workers, and some trans people.
- You can pay for the HPV vaccine at some pharmacies, travel clinics and other health centres.
- You may have 1 injection, or 2 injections at different times, depending on your age. You'll have 3 injections at different times if you have HIV or certain long-term health conditions.

Is the HPV vaccine safe?

- Yes, we know this from the results of tests called clinical trials and because lots of people have had it without any problems.
- Sometimes there are side effects. These are common and don't last long. You might have a sore arm, fever, headache, feel dizzy or feel tired.
- If you feel very ill or side effects last for a long time, it's important to see your GP.



If you or your parent, guardian or carer want to know more about side effects, visit jostrust.org.uk

What if I'm nervous about injections?

It's okay to be worried. It may help to know that the injection is quick. Here are some tips that might also be useful:

- Talk to a teacher or the nurse — they can give you extra support before and after the injection.
- Ask to have a friend or trusted person with you while you have the injection.
- Ask to get the HPV vaccine early in the day, so you don't have to wait for a long time.
- Take a bottle of water and drink small, regular sips.

Do I still need to go for cervical screening?

- In the UK, women and people with a cervix aged 25–64 can go to cervical screening.
- Cervical screening looks for types of HPV called 'high-risk' HPV and cell changes in your cervix which might turn into cervical cancer.
- It's important to go to cervical screening even if you've had the HPV vaccine. This is because the HPV vaccine doesn't protect against every type of high-risk HPV.



Learn more about HPV, cell changes and cervical screening at jostrust.org.uk

For more information and support...

- call our Helpline — **0808 802 8000**
- visit our website for information written and reviewed by experts — jostrust.org.uk
- join our **online Forum** to chat with others.