A young person with dark, curly hair is shown from the chest up, wearing a white collared shirt and a blue and white striped tie. They are smiling and looking towards the right. The background is a blurred classroom setting with desks and windows. A bright green vertical bar is on the left side of the image.

The HPV Vaccine: straightforward information about HPV, the vaccine, and why it matters to you.

Cancer prevention starts now

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HPV: What you need to know

What is HPV?

HPV (Human Papillomavirus) is a very common virus.

Most people will get it at some point - usually without knowing.

- There are over 200 types of HPV.
- Most don't cause any problems and clear on their own.
- Some types **can cause cancers in later life**, like cervical, head and neck, anal and penile, and others.

How can you catch HPV?

- HPV is passed on through close skin-to-skin contact, usually in the genital area. You **do not** need to have sex to catch HPV.

Why does HPV matter?

- Some kinds of high-risk HPV can persist and cause changes to cells in the body. These changes can develop into cancer later on.
- Around **1 in 20 cancers are linked to high-risk HPV**.

The vaccine: what you need to know

The HPV vaccine protects you from the types of HPV that can cause cancer.

Who gets the vaccine?

- All boys and girls aged 12-13 (Year 8).
- If you missed it, you can get it up to age 25.

How many doses?

- Just one dose is needed for most young people under 25.

How does it work?

- It trains your immune system to fight HPV before you're ever exposed to it.
- It works best at age 12-13 because your immune system responds strongly.

Is it safe?

- Over 280 million doses have been given worldwide.
- It does NOT contain the live virus, so it cannot infect you.

Are there side effects?

- Mostly mild, such as a sore arm, mild fever or headache.

What to expect

Your school vaccination team will visit during the school year, normally in the Spring Term.

Your **parent/carer will need to complete a consent form beforehand** for you to be eligible to have the HPV vaccine on the day.

On school vaccination day:

- Wear a short sleeve shirt or loose fitting top for easy access and make sure to drink plenty of water.
- Your class will be called down to the school hall to be vaccinated.
- The jab only takes a few seconds.
- You can go straight back to lessons afterwards.

It's completely normal to be nervous about having a vaccine. Please speak to the school nurse if you have any concerns.

Getting the HPV vaccine now helps protect you in the future.

It can help prevent cancers that might not show up until adulthood.

Think of it as **one small dose now = long-term protection later.**

Quick-fire fact sheet



HPV is super common - **around 4 out of 5 people will get it at some point in their life.** It can affect anyone, both boys and girls.



HPV can cause cancer - **about 10,000 cancers a year in the UK** - and head and neck cancers are now more common than cervical cancer.



High-risk HPV types matter - around 14 types are linked to cancer - and **HPV causes 1 in 20 cancers overall.**



The HPV vaccine prevents cancer - it's one of the only vaccines that can. **It could prevent 100,000+ cancer cases by 2058.**



It's safe and trusted worldwide - **over 280 million doses have been given in 130+ countries.** It has been used in the UK since 2008.



The **vaccine works BEST at the age of 12-13** - your immune response is the strongest at this age.



You get it in **Year 8 (age 12-13), usually in the Spring Term and for most people it's just one dose.**



Missed it? You can **catch up until age 25** through your school nurse, GP or local vaccination team.

Key information about the HPV vaccine

What vaccine is used?

- **Gardasil 9** is the standard UK HPV vaccine.
- A **single dose** is enough to provide long term protection for most people under 25.
- It contains **no live virus, no genetic material, no porcine or animal products, and is suitable for Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and other faith groups.**

How effective is it?

- The vaccine underwent over 15 years of research and clinical trials before being approved for public use.
- Young people vaccinated at ages **12-13 have around 90% protection.**
- Since rollout, the UK has seen major declines in HPV infections.

Who is offered the vaccine?

- All **boys and girls in Year 8 at secondary school (around age 12-13).**
- You can receive the vaccine **up to your 25th birthday** through your school nurse, GP or local vaccination team.

How do I say yes to the vaccine?

- If you are under 16, **parental consent is required for you to receive the HPV vaccine in school.** A consent form will be sent to your parents in advance of the vaccine clinics in the Spring Term.

Myths vs facts

Myth	VS	Fact
“The HPV vaccine is about sex.”		The HPV vaccine is about cancer prevention.
“Young people don’t need the HPV vaccine yet.”		Getting it early gives stronger, long-lasting protection - it works best before exposure to HPV.
"The HPV vaccine is a contraceptive."		The HPV vaccine does NOT prevent pregnancy and does NOT protect against other STIs.
“Only girls need it.”		HPV can affect anyone, and boys need protection too.
“The vaccine isn’t safe.”		It’s been researched for 15+ years and used millions of times safely.
“You can get HPV from the vaccine.”		Impossible. The vaccine doesn’t contain live virus.
“HPV isn’t common.”		Up to 80% of people will get HPV at some point.

HPV quiz

Test your knowledge – one jab, long-term protection!

Instructions: Choose the best answer for each question.

1. What does HPV stand for?

- A. Human Papillomavirus
- B. Highly Preventable Virus
- C. Human Pandemic Virus
- D. Health Protection Virus

2. Who gets HPV?

- A. Everyone gets it
- B. Only 2 out of 5 people will get it at some point in their lives
- C. Around 4 out of 5 people will get it at some point in their lives
- D. Only girls

3. How is HPV usually passed on?

- A. Through coughing or sneezing
- B. Through close skin-to-skin contact
- C. Through sharing food or drinks
- D. Through swimming pools

4. Who is offered the HPV vaccine?

- A. Only girls
- B. Only boys
- C. Only people who are sexually active
- D. Both boys and girls

5. Which of these cancers can be linked to high-risk HPV?

- A. Cervical cancer
- B. Head and neck cancer
- C. Anal cancer
- D. All of the above

6. Why is the HPV vaccine given at ages 12–13 (Year 8)?

- A. It only works at that age
- B. The immune system responds best then
- C. You must have it before exams
- D. It is required by law

7. Which of the following is a common side effect of the HPV vaccine?

- A. Long-term illness
- B. High fever for weeks
- C. A sore arm or mild headache
- D. Catching HPV

8. How many doses of the HPV vaccine do most young people under 25 need?

- A. Three doses
- B. Two doses
- C. One dose
- D. One dose every year

9. What is the name of the HPV vaccine used in the UK?

- A. Moderna
- B. Pfizer
- C. Gardasil 9
- D. AstraZeneca

10. Which statement about the HPV vaccine is TRUE?

- A. It contains the live virus
- B. It can give you HPV
- C. It helps prevent certain cancers
- D. It is unsafe

Scoring: You can find the answers on page 16.

Spreading the message

Help share the message “cancer prevention starts now”.

#HPVVaccine #OneJabLongTermProtection

Suggested posts

✔ Post 1 — “Future you will thank you”

The HPV vaccine protects you from several cancers - one quick jab now = major protection later.

Your future self? Totally grateful. ❤️💉

✔ Post 2 — “Why you get it at school”

Did you know? The HPV vaccine works best before you’re ever exposed to the virus - that’s why you get it in school.

One quick jab today = long-term protection. 💪🔥

Post 3 — “Protect your future”



This jab isn’t just a jab - it’s protection against several cancers. Safe ✔ Effective ✔ Long-term ✔

If you get offered it at school, say YES. ✨💉

Post 4 — “Trusted worldwide”



Millions of people around the world have safely had the HPV vaccine. It’s one of the best tools we have to prevent cancer later in life. Don’t miss your chance. 🌍💉

TikTok Script: “The HPV Vaccine in 30 Seconds”

[Clip 1 — You pointing to camera]

“Wait! Did you know there’s a vaccine that helps prevent cancer later in life?”

[Clip 2 — Text on screen: “HPV = super common”]

“HPV is a really common virus - most people will get it at some point and never even know.”

[Clip 3 — You shrugging like ‘no big deal’]

“But some types can cause cancer when you’re older... which is why the HPV vaccine exists.”

[Clip 4 — Text: “One jab. Big protection.”]

“One quick jab at age 12-13 gives long-lasting protection. Literally one dose for most people is enough.”

[Clip 5 — ‘Safe  graphic]

“It’s been used safely worldwide for years - no live virus, no animal products, nothing weird.”

[Clip 6 — You giving a thumbs-up]

“And no - it’s not about sex. It’s about cancer and your future health.”

[Clip 7 — Call to action]

“So if the school nurse offers it... say yes. Protect your future self.”


[Final screen text]

✨ “One jab. Long-term protection.”

✨ #HPVvaccine #OneJabLongTermProtection #StayHealthy

Suggested email or post

Looking after your health - and the health of the people you care about - really matters. Yes, eating well and staying active helps, but vaccines are another super important way to stay healthy. They basically train your body to spot and fight off viruses or bacteria before they can cause problems. Over the years, vaccines have helped stop lots of serious diseases.

 So, what about the HPV vaccine? There's a virus called HPV (Human Papillomavirus) - and it's really common. Most people will come into contact with it at some point, and usually it goes away on its own without causing any issues. But some types of HPV can cause health problems later in life, including certain cancers like head and neck cancer and cervical cancer.

That's where the HPV vaccine comes in.

It protects you from the types of HPV that are most likely to cause cancer. Everyone - boys and girls - is offered it in Year 8 (age 12–13) because that's when it works best.

 What's NOT in the vaccine? Good news:

- It does NOT contain the live virus and it can't give you HPV. It just trains your immune system to recognise HPV and fight it off safely.
- It contains NO pork or animal products, and it's widely accepted as halal and kosher.

The HPV vaccine has been used worldwide for years, and is constantly checked to make sure it's safe and effective.

HPV vaccinations at school

The HPV vaccine is coming to your school.

From April, Year 8 students (and anyone older who still needs it) will be offered the HPV vaccine at secondary school. It's quick, it's safe, and it helps protect you from certain cancers later in life. 💉 ✨

 Want more info for your area?

- If you're in **North West London** (Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Kensington & Chelsea, Westminster), visit:

 [Vaccination UK](#)

- If you're in **South West London** (Croydon, Kingston, Merton, Richmond, Sutton, Wandsworth), visit:

 [Kingston & Richmond NHS Foundation Trust](#)

Getting the HPV vaccine gives you extra protection that helps keep you healthy not just now, but way into your adult life.

It's one of the easiest ways to protect your future self. ❤️

#HPVVaccine #OneJabLongTermProtection

HPV quiz

answers

1. **What does HPV stand for?**

A. Human Papilloma Virus

2. **How gets HPV?**

C. Around 4 out of 5 people will get it at some point in their lives

3. **How is HPV usually passed on?**

B. Through close skin-to-skin contact

4. **Who is offered the HPV vaccine?**

D. Both boys and girls

5. **Which of these cancers can be linked to high-risk HPV?**

D. All of the above

6. **Why is the HPV vaccine given at ages 12–13 (Year 8)?**

B. The immune system responds best then

7. **Which of the following is a common side effect of the HPV vaccine?**

C. A sore arm or mild headache

8. **How many doses of the HPV vaccine do most young people under 25 need?**

C. One dose

9. **What is the name of the HPV vaccine used in the UK?**

C. Gardasil 9

10. **Which statement about the HPV vaccine is TRUE?**

C. It helps prevent certain cancers

9-10 correct: HPV Hero 🏆

7-8 correct: Great knowledge 🙌

6 correct: Good start 👍

5 and under: Let's go over the key facts again 💬

Where to get more information

For more information about the HPV vaccine, you can visit:

- 👉 **Arm Against Cancer HPV Leaflet (available in multiple languages):** [The universal HPV immunisation programme](#)
- 👉 **Health For Teens:** <https://www.healthforteens.co.uk/health/immunisation/6-facts-about-the-hpv-vaccine/>
- 👉 **NHS England:** www.nhs.uk/hpv
- 👉 **NHS Inform:** [HPV vaccine | NHS inform](#)
- 👉 **Bristol Educate:** <https://youtu.be/rHUMDOI3s2U>

This HPV Vaccine Community Toolkit has been produced by RM Partners NHS Cancer Alliance

