



Department of Health
Agency of Human Services



2014 National Immunization Survey: HPV vaccine is cancer protection but not enough teens are vaccinated



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August is National Immunization Awareness Month - #NIAM15

BURLINGTON – More Vermont teens are getting vaccinated against whooping cough and meningococcal disease – but most are not fully vaccinated against human papilloma virus infection, which can cause cancer later in life. Three doses of the HPV vaccine given over six months are needed for a person to be fully protected.

According to the latest National Immunization Survey-Teen, HPV vaccination coverage falls short. In Vermont, rates of HPV vaccination increased just slightly for girls and boys, with one exception: boys age 13 to 17 who received the second dose of HPV vaccine rose significantly from 26 percent in 2013 to 41 percent in 2014, higher than the national average of 31 percent. Thirty-one percent of teen boys in Vermont completed the vaccination series and received all three doses, higher than the national average of 22 percent. Teen girls who received three doses of HPV vaccine rose slightly from 43 percent in 2013 to 50 percent in 2014, higher than the national average of 40 percent.

"The HPV vaccine is cancer prevention," said Christine Finley, immunization program manager for the Vermont Department of Health. "Human papilloma virus is a very common infection especially among teens and young adults, and it's a real risk for cancer. Because the vaccine is more effective when given at a younger age, it is recommended for all boys and girls between 11 and 12 years old."

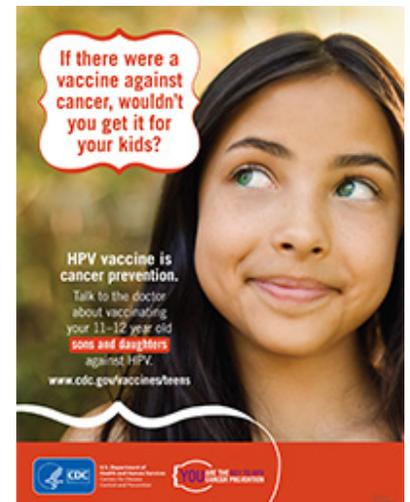
HPV vaccine protects against multiple types of cancer caused by persistent HPV infection, including cancers of the cervix, vagina, and vulva in women, the penis in men, and the anus and oropharynx (back of the throat, base of the tongue and tonsils) in both men and women. Yet half of teen girls and 70 percent of teen boys in Vermont are not fully vaccinated, and therefore vulnerable to cancers caused by HPV infections.

The Health Department's Immunization Program has partnered with the Vermont Child Health Improvement Program (VCHIP), the Vermont chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and the Hicks Foundation to provide information to parents and health care providers about the importance of this vaccine for cancer prevention. The Vermont Immunization Registry also provides detailed quarterly reports to health care provider practices on their HPV immunization rates.

The 2014 National Immunization Survey-Teen is conducted each year by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The latest [report](#) was released on July 31. Overall results show an upward trend in the number of Vermont teens who received the recommended vaccines HPV, Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis) and meningococcal disease in 2014.

To find out more about vaccines for teens, visit healthvermont.gov.

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