

TIPS FOR TALKING ABOUT HPV WITH PARENTS AND PATIENTS AT THE DENTAL OFFICE

The HPV vaccine can help prevent cancers of the head and neck. This tip sheet is meant to help dental professionals talk with parents and patients about the HPV vaccine.

WHAT CAN I SAY TO PARENTS AND PATIENTS ABOUT THE HPV VACCINE?

The HPV vaccine can help prevent cancers of the head and neck. The HPV vaccine is recommended for both boys and girls, and your child is the right age to get the vaccine. Talk with your child's doctor about it.

PARENTS MAY ASK...	YOUR ANSWER...
What is HPV?	HPV (human papillomavirus) is a very common virus that almost everyone will have at some time in their lives. It can cause several types of cancer, including head/neck and cervical cancers.
How common is HPV?	Nearly everyone will have HPV in their lifetime and may never even know it.
What is the most common HPV-related cancer?	In Vermont the most common HPV-related cancer occurs in the head and neck, and it is most common in men (VCR, 2001-2015).
Why are you—a dental professional—talking to me about the vaccine?	More and more people in the U.S. and Vermont are getting head and neck cancers caused by HPV. I want to make sure my patients know that there is a vaccine to help prevent these cancers.
Why is the vaccine important now?	Children's immune response is stronger when they're younger. Before age 15, they only need two doses of the vaccine. Once they turn 15, they need three doses.
Is the vaccine safe?	Yes. The vaccine's safety has been tracked for years, and research shows it's safe. The most common side effect is soreness where the vaccine was given.
Is the vaccine effective?	Yes. The vaccine protects against the most common types of HPV that cause cancer. It is expected to prevent over 90% of cancer cases caused by HPV.
Who needs the vaccine?	All boys and girls should get the HPV vaccine. Doctors recommend getting the vaccine at ages 11-12. The vaccine is approved for males and females 9-26 years old. Adults ages 27-45 years can be vaccinated after a decision-making discussion with their doctor.
How much does the vaccine cost?	In Vermont, the HPV vaccine is provided at no cost to all Primary Care Providers. Simply go to your doctor to get the vaccine. Uninsured adolescents and adults 19-26 years may receive the HPV vaccine at Local Health Offices free of charge.
I'm still not sure about the vaccine. What should I do?	Write your questions and concerns down and talk with your child's doctor.