

# Start at 9

To Prevent Cancers Caused by HPV—For Providers

## Updated Recommendation

**Providers should start the 2-dose HPV vaccine series at the age 9 well-visit to increase vaccination completion success and prevent more cancers.<sup>1</sup>**

### Facts About HPV and HPV Vaccination

- HPV is linked with 91% of cervical and anal cancers, 63% of penile cancers, and 70% of oropharynx cancers.<sup>2</sup>
- Research has shown that the HPV vaccine provides close to 100% protection against infections and pre-cancers caused by high-risk HPV types.<sup>3</sup>
- In 2021, only 33.8% of 13-year-old-adolescents in NYS (excluding NYC) have completed the HPV vaccine series.<sup>4</sup>

### Key Messages for Providers

1. **Start recommending HPV vaccination at age 9 years to increase the chance of series completion by age 13 years.<sup>5</sup>**
  - Implementing HPV vaccination at the earliest opportunity produces a strong immune response. HPV vaccination at younger ages (i.e., less than 15 years), even with a reduced 2-dose schedule, yields higher antibody titers compared to vaccination later in adolescence.
2. **The American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Cancer Society, and the National HPV Vaccination Roundtable recommend starting the series at age 9.<sup>1,3,6</sup>**
  - This strategy is also consistent with the ACIP recommendation stating that the HPV series can start at age 9.<sup>7</sup>
3. **HPV vaccination is cancer prevention.<sup>1,3,7</sup>**
  - HPV vaccination helps protect against six types of cancer. The vast majority of HPV-related cancer deaths are preventable with the 9-valent HPV vaccine.
  - HPV vaccination can prevent more than 90% of cancers caused by the HPV virus when given at the recommended ages.
  - The burden of HPV-related mortality in the U.S. far surpasses the mortality from tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis, and meningococcal disease combined.
4. **Other reasons cited for starting the HPV vaccine series at age 9 include<sup>6</sup> :**
  - Decreases questions about sexual activity.
  - Decreases requests for only the “school-required vaccines.”
  - Increases likelihood of full vaccination before first HPV exposure.
  - Widely acceptable to parents, providers, and systems.

### Simple Sample Script:

“Now that your child is 9, they’re due for a vaccination to help protect them from cancers caused by the HPV virus. We will give the vaccine today. Do you have any questions?”

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## Tips for Designing Practice

### Workflows<sup>2,5,9</sup>

- **Consider the advantages of offering the HPV vaccine as a stand-alone vaccination at age 9.**

This provides the best protection and increases the likelihood of series completion by the 13<sup>th</sup> birthday. The HPV vaccine can be given in conjunction with other vaccines for the second dose.

- Consider updating your EMR to prompt the initiation of the HPV vaccine series for your patients after their 9<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- Consider using standing order sets in your EMR to improve efficiency and access to administration of the HPV vaccine.
- To assure initiation and completion of the series, run proactive automatic reports on a monthly or quarterly basis and make this part of your pre-visit planning workflow/assessment.
- Consider opening your calendar to schedule patients for follow up visits before they leave the office.
- Consider using parent/caregiver education resources to engage with parents on the value of HPV vaccination.
  - [Why Age 9? Fact Sheet](#)
  - [HPV \(Human Papillomavirus\) Vaccine: What you Need to Know](#)

## Human papillomavirus vaccination (minimum age: 9 years)

### Routine and Catch-Up Vaccination

- HPV vaccination routinely recommended at **age 11-12 years (can start at age 9 years)** and catch-up HPV vaccination recommended for all persons through age 18 years if not adequately vaccinated
- 2-or 3-dose series depending on age at initial vaccination:
  - **Age 9-14 years at initial vaccination:** 2-dose series at 0, 6-12 months (minimum interval: 5 months; repeat dose if administered too soon)
  - **Age 15 years old or older at initial vaccination:** 3-dose series at 0, 1-2 months, 6 months (minimum intervals: dose 1 to dose 2: 4 weeks; dose 2 to dose 3: 12 weeks; dose 1 to dose 3: 5 months; for all intervals, repeat dose if administered too soon)
- **Interrupted schedules:** If vaccination schedule is interrupted, the series does not need to be restarted.
- No additional dose recommended when any HPV vaccine series has been completed using the recommended dosing intervals.

### Special Situations

- **Immunocompromising conditions, including HIV infection:** 3-dose series, even for those who initiate vaccination at ages 9 through 14 years.
- **History of sexual abuse or assault:** Start at age 9 years
- **Pregnancy:** Pregnancy testing not needed before vaccination; HPV vaccination is recommended after pregnancy; no intervention needed if vaccinated while pregnant.

Adapted From *Recommended Child and Adolescent Immunization Schedule for ages 18 years and younger—2023*, by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.<sup>8</sup> In the public domain.

1. National HPV Vaccination Roundtable. HPV vaccination at 9-12 years old. <https://hpvrroundtable.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Evidence-Summary-HPV-Vaccination-Age-9-12-Final.pdf>. Published April 2022. Accessed June 30, 2023.
2. National HPV Vaccination Roundtable. Cancer prevention through HPV vaccination in your practice: An action guide for physicians, physicians assistants, and nurse practitioners. <https://hpvrroundtable.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/PROVIDERS-Action-Guide-WEB.pdf>. Published September 2019. Accessed June 30, 2023.
3. American Cancer Society. HPV VACs: Just the facts for providers. <https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/online-documents/en/pdf/flyers/hpv-vacs-just-the-facts-for-providers.pdf>. Published May 2020. Accessed June 30, 2023.
4. New York State Department of Health. Prevention agenda dashboard. [https://webb1.health.ny.gov/SASStoredProcess/quest?\\_program=/EBI/PHIG/apps/dashboard/pa\\_dashboard&p=it&ind\\_id=pa41\\_0](https://webb1.health.ny.gov/SASStoredProcess/quest?_program=/EBI/PHIG/apps/dashboard/pa_dashboard&p=it&ind_id=pa41_0). Revised January 2023. Accessed June 30, 2023.
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6. O'Leary, ST. Why AAP recommends initiating HPV vaccination as early as age 9. American Academy of Pediatrics. 2019. <https://publications.aap.org/aapnews/news/14942/Why-AAP-recommends-initiating-HPV-vaccination-as>.
7. Meites E, Szilagyi PG, Chesson HW, et al. Human papillomavirus vaccination for adults: updated recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep. 2019;68(32):698-702. <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/68/wr/mm6832a3.htm>.
8. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Recommended Child and Adolescent Immunization Schedule for ages 18 years and younger—2023. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/downloads/child/0-18yrs-child-combined-schedule.pdf>. Published April 2023. Accessed June 30, 2023.
9. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 5 ways to boost your HPV vaccination rates. <https://www.cdc.gov/hpv/hcp/boosting-vacc-rates.html>. Published November 2021. Accessed June 30, 2023.