



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

Stop HPV

Human Papillomavirus-Associated Cancers — United States, 2004–2008

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[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the *MMWR*, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

Human papillomavirus, or HPV, is linked to nearly all cervical cancers in women and to several other cancers in both sexes. Of the nearly 34,000 HPV-associated cancers that are diagnosed each year, two-thirds occur in women.

Meg Watson is a researcher with CDC's Division of Cancer Prevention and Control. She's joining us today to discuss how to prevent HPV. Welcome to the show, Meg.

[Ms. Watson] Thanks for having me.

[Dr. Gaynes] Meg, how is HPV transmitted?

[Ms. Watson] Genital HPV is very common and it's usually transmitted through sexual contact.

[Dr. Gaynes] Does HPV infection always lead to some form of cancer?

[Ms. Watson] No. HPV infection usually goes away on its own. If it doesn't, it can cause cancer over time. There's no treatment for HPV infection. The most common disease resulting from the infection is cervical abnormalities, possibly leading to cancer. Those abnormalities can be found and treated through cervical screening, or Pap testing. Since the infection is so common, screening is recommended for women every three years, starting at age 21, through age 65. Women age 30 and older have the option to get the HPV test, along with the Pap test, and extend screening intervals to five years.

[Dr. Gaynes] How can HPV infection be prevented?

[Ms. Watson] Condom use and limiting sexual partners can help reduce, but not eliminate, the risk of HPV infection. An HPV vaccine can help prevent infection with the types that most commonly cause cancer, but the vaccine is most effective when given before beginning sexual activity.

[Dr. Gaynes] Well, who should receive the HPV vaccine?

[Ms. Watson] A series of three doses is recommended for girls and boys, age 11 to 12, and can be given as young as nine. Those who haven't already received the vaccine can get catch-up vaccination up to age 26 for women and 21 for men.

[Dr. Gaynes] Where can listeners get more information about HPV?

[Ms. Watson] From our website at www.cdc.gov/hpv.

[Dr. Gaynes] Thanks, Meg. I've been talking today with CDC's Meg Watson about ways to prevent HPV infection.

Remember, HPV vaccines help prevent infection. Both boys and girls aged 11 and 12 years old should receive three doses of the vaccine. A catch-up vaccine is recommended for women through the age of 26 and for men through the age of 21 who have never completed the series.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.