

Information about human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination

The Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases (SCVPD) and the Scientific Committee on AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections (SCAS) under the Centre for Health Protection have jointly recommended that the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine (i.e. cervical cancer vaccine) be included in the Hong Kong Childhood Immunisation Programme as a public health programme for cervical cancer prevention. School Immunisation Teams (SIT) of the Department of Health (DH) visit schools to provide the first dose of 9-valent HPV vaccine to Primary Five female students at their schools. The second dose of HPV vaccine will be given to the girls when they reach Primary Six in the following school year.

What is HPV?

HPV is the name of a group of viruses that includes more than 150 genotypes. Around 40 of these viruses infect the genital area of men and women. HPV can cause premalignant changes and malignant cancers of cervix, vagina, vulva and anus.

What is HPV vaccine?

HPV vaccine is a prophylactic vaccine to prevent cervical cancer as well as other HPV-related cancers or diseases. In Hong Kong, HPV-16, 18, 31, 33, 45, 52, 58 accounted for about 90% of cases of cervical cancer. All the above seven genotypes are included in the 9-valent HPV vaccine.

How to receive HPV vaccination?

More information on HPV and consent form for the vaccine will be provided to parents of Primary Five or Six female students.

If you have further enquiries, please contact SIT at 2615 8577 at office hour (Monday to Friday: 9am to 1pm, 2pm to 5:30pm).

Know More About HPV Vaccine

What are the possible side effects of HPV vaccines?

HPV vaccines are generally safe. Most students do not have serious reactions after receiving HPV vaccination. Common side effects are similar to those from other vaccinations, such as:

- (1) Mild and short-lasting side effects, including headache, dizziness, nausea and fatigue.
- (2) Soreness, redness or swelling at the injection site.

Is there any safety concern with HPV vaccine?

HPV vaccines have been used worldwide for many years. After extensive examinations of scientific evidence and information on adverse reactions following HPV vaccination, the World Health Organization and overseas health authorities have concluded that HPV vaccines are safe and effective, and there is no evidence that HPV vaccination will cause serious side effects. DH will closely monitor the report of adverse events after immunisation.

Why is HPV vaccine given at such a young age?

Would receiving the vaccine encourage premature sex?

HPV vaccines work best for women who have never been exposed to HPV infection and are therefore recommended for girls of suitable ages before sexual debut. Research has shown that getting the HPV vaccine does not make children more likely to be sexually active or start having sex at a younger age.