



# WOMEN'S HEALTH

## Cervical Cancer Vaccine: Know The Facts

(NAPSA)—It is estimated that in 2007, more than 11,000 American women will be diagnosed with cervical cancer, and an average of 10 women will die each day from the disease. Cervical cancer is caused by certain types of a common virus called the human papilloma-virus, or HPV. The good news is that doctors have ways to protect women from cervical cancer and other diseases caused by HPV. So what is HPV and how can you protect yourself?

There are 100 different types of HPV. For most people, the virus goes away on its own. However, there are certain HPV types that have the potential to lead to cervical cancer, precancerous lesions or genital warts. HPV types 16 and 18 cause approximately 70 percent of cervical cancer. HPV types 6 and 11 are accountable for 90 percent of genital warts. Gardasil, the cervical cancer vaccine, may help protect against diseases caused by

HPV types 6, 11, 16 and 18.

This four-type (quadrivalent) vaccine is given in three injections over six months, is meant for women ages 9 to 26, and is most effective when given before there is any contact with HPV. However, women should also know that even if they have been exposed to HPV, they may still benefit; chances are they haven't been exposed to all four types of HPV that the vaccine covers.

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**Even women who have been exposed to HPV may still benefit from the vaccine as they may not have been exposed to all four types of HPV that the vaccine covers.**

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Pap tests will always be an important part of cervical cancer prevention, and it is still critical that people who get the vaccine

continue to get regular screenings since the vaccine does not protect against all HPV types that cause cervical cancer. Ultimately, the best thing to do is to talk to your doctor to find out if this vaccine is right for you (or your daughter).

It's important to remember that while the vaccine prevents the types of HPV that cause most cases of cervical cancer, it will not protect against diseases caused by HPV types not covered by the vaccine. People who are allergic to any of the components of the vaccine should not get it. In addition, females who are pregnant should not be vaccinated. All women considering the vaccine should talk with their physician.

Please visit [www.gardasil.com](http://www.gardasil.com) for more information, including prescribing information and patient product information. For more information on HPV and related diseases, you can visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or [www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov).