



Parents Urged To Vaccinate Kids Against HPV

(NAPSA)—If there were a vaccine to prevent a cancer that kills 4,000 women each year, would you get it for your children? Libby Malphrus' personal battle against cervical cancer convinced her how important it is to protect her own daughter.

"Anyone can get cervical cancer. I was at my healthiest when I was diagnosed," said Malphrus, a vivacious mom and professional genetics counselor. "I was eating right, exercising and feeling healthy—then, BOOM! I found out I had cervical cancer, even with regular Pap tests and check-ups. I was not a person who expected this."

Every year, about 4,000 women die from cervical cancer in the United States—even with screening and treatment. In addition, about 17,000 women are affected by HPV-related cancers yearly. HPV is short for human papillomavirus, a common virus. In both women and men, HPV can cause anal cancer and cancer of the mouth/throat (oropharyngeal cancer). It can also cause cancers of the cervix, vulva and vagina in women, and cancer of the penis in men.

The remarkable thing is that most of these cancers can be prevented by the HPV vaccine. Dr. Anne Schuchat, assistant surgeon general and director, National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), said, "We have a vaccine against cancer that is safe and effective. Please make sure your 11–12-year-olds get vaccinated. No one's daughter should have to suffer from cervical cancer in the future."

Malphrus added, "We have this



According to the CDC, most HPV-related cancers can be prevented by early vaccination.

amazing opportunity to prevent cancer. As soon as my daughter turns 11, we will call the pediatrician's office to schedule her first HPV vaccination. I don't want her to ever have to experience the pain and suffering I went through—and I consider myself lucky."

Besides her personal journey with cancer, Malphrus lost her mother to cancer very recently, making her passionate about prevention.

"I talk to my friends and family all the time. I remind them that we don't wait until they are exposed to a disease to get them their vaccines, we do it now. It's the same with the HPV vaccine. Let's get that protection on board before they are ever making decisions about dating, marriage or having a family."

If you haven't gotten your child the HPV vaccine yet or haven't completed the three-dose series, call your child's doctor or nurse today. If you have an older teen who isn't yet vaccinated, it's not too late.

Visit the CDC website to find out more about HPV vaccine: www.cdc.gov/vaccines/teens.