

## Does it have any side effects?

The most common side effects are pain, redness or swelling in the arm where the vaccine was given, headache, dizziness, nausea and/or a mild fever.

These can be treated with paracetamol or ibuprofen.

Occasionally teenagers faint after getting the HPV vaccine. Like most vaccines, severe allergic reactions are extremely rare. As always, seek medical advice if you are concerned.

## I'd like to have the vaccine.

### What do I do now?

The vaccine is available to MSM up to and including 45 years of age, through many public STI and HIV clinics in Ireland.

Please ask your clinic nurse or doctor for more details.

## HPV vaccination record

Record your HPV vaccinations below to ensure that you don't miss out on protection against genital warts and HPV related cancers.

HPV VACCINE DOSE	DATE
1st dose	
2nd dose	
3rd dose	

**Remember to be protected, you need all three doses!**

**(If you are under 15 years old there is a two dose schedule)**

For more information on HPV,  
the vaccine and its safety, visit:

[www.hpv.ie](http://www.hpv.ie)

Adapted from Public Health England  
HPV Vaccination leaflet for MSM

Sexual Health & Crisis Pregnancy  
Programme Office  
89 – 94 Capel Street, Dublin 1, D01 P281

Tel: 076 69 59130



Seirbhís Sláinte  
Níos Fearr  
á Forbairt

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HPV VACCINATION  
INFORMATION LEAFLET FOR

# MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN (MSM)

(INCLUDING MSM LIVING WITH HIV)

Protecting yourself against  
warts & cancer caused by  
human papillomavirus

**In July 2018, the National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) recommended the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine for MSM up to and including 45 years of age. This includes MSM living with HIV. The vaccine is available through many public STI and HIV clinics in Ireland.**

**The vaccine will help to prevent HPV infection which can cause genital warts and HPV-associated cancers.**

### **What is human papillomavirus (HPV) and what diseases can it cause?**

HPV infection is a very common infection. The majority of HPV infections do not cause any symptoms and infections usually clear up on their own.

There are over 100 different types of HPV that can infect the skin and mucous membranes (for example the throat, anus and penis). Persistence of some types of HPV infections can lead to cancers e.g. HPV types 16 and 18 cause the majority of HPV associated cancers, notably anal, throat and penile cancer in men and cervical cancer in women.

Other types of HPV such as 6 and 11 cause more than 90% of genital warts.

### **How is HPV infection spread?**

HPV is spread mainly by skin to skin contact. Genital HPV infections are usually associated with sexual contact.

### **Can HPV infection be prevented?**

Condoms reduce the likelihood of HPV infection but do not guarantee protection from infection. This is because HPV can be transmitted by skin contact with areas not covered by condoms.

Vaccination against HPV prevents infection and can reduce the chances of HPV associated cancers. The vaccine offered in Ireland prevents against the HPV types that cause genital warts and many of the cancer causing types.

For people aged over 15 years, the vaccine is given as a course of 3 injections over 6-12 months.

<b>WHAT DO I NEED?</b>
<b>From 15 to 45 years of age</b>
<b>1st dose</b>
<b>2nd dose</b> at least 1 month and preferably 2 months after the first dose
<b>3rd dose</b> at least 3 months and preferably 4 months after the second dose and ideally within 12 months of the first dose

Ideally, vaccine should be given before you become sexually active, but the protection is still good even if you receive the vaccine later.

To get the best protection, it is important you receive the full course of vaccination.

### **Why should MSM attending STI/HIV clinics be vaccinated?**

The risk of anal cancer in MSM is higher than in heterosexual men. If you also have HIV, this risk is higher again. In addition, MSM are more likely to get genital warts. MSM attending STI/HIV clinics are known to have an increased risk of HPV infection and disease.

In Ireland, a HPV vaccine programme for all girls in 1st year of second level school has been in place since May 2010.

Vaccinating the majority of girls in Ireland means that their male partners get some protection too. However boys who grow up to become MSM will get far less of this protection.

The national HPV vaccine programme may be extended to adolescent boys in the future.

HPV vaccination is a very effective way to reduce your risk of genital warts immediately and your risk of developing HPV-associated cancer in the future.

### **Is the vaccine safe?**

Yes. For more than 12 years the safety of the HPV vaccine has been strictly monitored and frequently reviewed by many international bodies including:

- The European Medicines Agency (EMA);
- The Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety of the World Health Organization;
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the US.

These international bodies have continually reported that the vaccine is safe with no known long-term side effects.

**More than 750,000 doses of this vaccine have been distributed in Ireland and more than a quarter of a million fully vaccinated.**

**More than 244 million doses of this vaccine have been distributed worldwide.**

**More than 100 million people have been safely vaccinated against HPV disease.**