

## What is HPV?

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is a common virus that affects both females and males. Many types of HPV are harmless, do not cause any symptoms, and go away on their own.

About 30 types of HPV are known as genital HPV since they affect the genital area. Some types are high-risk and can cause cervical cancer or abnormal cells in the lining of the cervix that sometimes turn into cancer. Others are low-risk and can cause genital warts and changes in the cervix that are benign (abnormal, but noncancerous).

## Who gets genital HPV?

Anyone who has any kind of sexual activity involving genital contact could get genital HPV. Because many people who have HPV may not show any signs or symptoms, they can transmit the virus without even knowing it.

HPV is more common than you might think. In 2005, approximately 20 million Americans had genital HPV. More than 6 million new cases of genital HPV are diagnosed in the United States every year.

## How do I know if I have HPV?

Because HPV may not show any signs or symptoms, you probably won't know you have it. Most women are diagnosed with HPV as a result of abnormal Pap tests. A Pap test (also known as a Pap smear) is part of a gynecological exam that helps detect abnormal cells in the lining of the cervix before the cells have the chance to become precancers or cervical cancer. Many cervical precancers (changes that could lead to cancer) are related to HPV and can be treated successfully if detected early. That's why early detection is so important.

## OMG Locations

### Avon Lake

32730 Walker Rd.  
Building J  
Avon Lake, Ohio 44012  
ph. (440) 933.2322

### Elyria

10325 Dewhurst Rd.  
Elyria, Ohio 44035  
ph. (440) 366.3600

### Medina

3457 Medina Rd.  
Medina, Ohio 44256  
ph. (330) 721.2100

### Olmsted Falls

26908 Cook Rd.  
Olmsted Twp., Ohio 44138  
ph. (440) 427.5001

### Rocky River

20006 Detroit Rd., #101  
Rocky River, Ohio 44116  
ph. (440) 333.7539

### Southwest Office

7255 Old Oak Blvd., C-408  
Middleburg Hts., Ohio 44130  
ph. (440) 239.3700

### Sports Medicine Center

1997 Healthway Dr.  
Suite 203  
Avon, Ohio 44011  
ph. (440) 366.3600

### Uro Gynecology Center

2211 Crocker Rd.  
Suite 170  
Westlake, Ohio 44145  
ph. (440) 617.2741

### Westlake

29325 Health Campus Dr.  
Suite 3  
Westlake, Ohio 44145  
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WHAT TO KNOW

# Learning About HPV (Human Papillomavirus)



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## What are genital warts?

Genital warts are flesh-colored growths that are most often caused by certain types of Human Papillomavirus (HPV). Genital warts most often appear on the external genitals or near the anus. Genital warts can appear inside the vagina and on the cervix.

Genital warts sometimes disappear on their own without treatment. However, there is no way to tell if they will disappear or grow larger.

## How are abnormal genital warts treated?

There are several treatment options available. Your doctor will recommend one based on the location and size of the warts. Treatments include: creams, removal by burning, freezing or laser surgery.

Even after the treatment, there is always the chance that the genital warts could return because HPV still may be present.

*Help is available through  
Prevention, Vaccination, Treatment*

## What are abnormal cervical cells?

Abnormal cervical cells (also called cervical dysplasia) are cells in the lining of the cervix that have changed in their appearance under the microscope.

The more severe the cervical abnormality, the more likely it is that cervical cancer could develop in the future. Most often, this can take a number of years, although in rare cases it can happen within a year.

## How are abnormal cervical cells treated?

Most abnormal cells in the lining of the cervix will eventually go away on their own. If the abnormalities are mild, your doctor may choose to closely monitor them. If the abnormalities are more severe, removing these cells can almost always prevent cervical cancer from developing in the future. Methods commonly used to treat abnormal cervical cells include freezing, removing them using an electrical instrument and/or conventional surgery.

According to the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, the only way you can totally protect yourself against HPV is to avoid any sexual activity that involves genital contact.

### *There are a few things you can do to decrease your chances:*

- Limit your sexual partners
- Stay in a long-term, exclusive relationship with someone who doesn't have HPV
- Use a condom – though it's unknown how much protection from HPV condoms actually provide.

## What is cervical cancer?

Cervical cancer is cancer of the cervix. The cervix is the part of the uterus that connects the upper part of the uterus (the womb) to the vagina.

Cervical cancer is a serious condition that can be life threatening. If a woman becomes infected with certain high-risk types of HPV and the infection is not treated, abnormal cells can develop in the lining of the cervix.

## How is cervical cancer treated?

The three main methods are surgery (an operation to remove the cancer), radiation therapy (using high energy beams to destroy cancer cells) and chemotherapy (using medications to disrupt the growth of cancer cells). In some cases treatment includes two or more of these methods.

Before choosing a treatment, a doctor will consider the size of the cancer, whether it has spread, the women's age and overall health and patient preferences. The treatment that is right for one person may not be right for someone else.

## The Good News

The HPV vaccine can protect you or your child. A vaccine (injection/shot) is available that helps protect against the diseases caused by HPV types in the vaccine (6, 11, 16, and 18). These 4 types have been selected because they cause approximately 70% of cervical cancers and 90% of genital warts.

The vaccine works best when given before you or your child has any contact with certain types of HPV (i.e., HPV types 6, 11, 16 and 18) that is, before ever having sex.

The vaccine helps prevent these diseases, but it will not treat them. This vaccine will not protect you against HPV types to which you may have already been exposed. It will also not protect you against other sexually transmitted diseases or infections (STDs and STIs) that are not caused by HPV.

## Who can receive the vaccine?

The vaccine is for girls and women 9 – 26 years of age who have not been exposed to or had HPV.

The vaccine is given as an injection. Vaccine is given in 3 doses spaced over a period of 6 months.

Anyone who is allergic to any of the ingredients in the vaccine should not get this vaccine. A questionnaire will be filled out prior to vaccination to determine possible allergic reaction.

