

# Home field advantage: Intravaginal immunization may help protect against infection

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Sexually-transmitted diseases (STDs) enter the body through the mucosal epithelial cells and the ability to direct pathogen-clearing T-cells to points of infection may be the critical element in developing successful vaccines against these infections.

In a study published in the *Journal of Clinical Investigation*, researchers led by John Schiller at the [National Cancer Institute](#) investigated the immune response to intravaginal immunization in mice infected with a form of the HPV virus carrying a model antigen.

They found that intravaginal immunization significantly increased the number of immune cells present in the vaginal mucosa compared with a general immune system booster.

These results indicate that site-specific vaccination enhances the local [immune system response](#) and may be useful in developing STD vaccines.

**More information:** Intravaginal immunization with HPV vectors induces tissue-resident CD8+ T cells, *Journal of Clinical Investigation*, 2012.

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