

Study highlights attitudes toward HPV vaccination for boys

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(Boston)- A new Boston University School of Medicine (BUSM) study has found that low-income and minority parents/guardians were receptive toward vaccinating boys against Human Papilloma Virus (HPV). However, racial/ethnic differences emerged in attitudes regarding school-entry mandates. The findings appear online in the journal *Clinical Pediatrics*.

Although low-income and [minority men](#) have higher rates of oral [HPV infection](#) and are more likely to suffer from HPV-related diseases including penile, anal and oral cancers, few studies have examined parental attitudes after the HPV vaccine was approved for males in 2009.

This study aimed to provide an in-depth understanding of how low-income and minority parents view HPV vaccination for boys using open-ended interview questions. The analysis was based on the Health Belief Model which measures perceived severity, susceptibility, benefits and barriers.

Researchers led by corresponding author, Rebecca Perkins, MD, MSc, assistant professor of [obstetrics and gynecology](#) at BUSM, interviewed 120 parents and legal guardians of boys age 11 to 17 who accompanied them for physician visits between December 2011-2012. All subjects were read a short educational paragraph explaining HPV and HPV vaccination prior to answering questions.

Perceiving the severe consequences of being exposed to HPV, most parents/guardians saw more benefits than barriers to vaccinating boys against HPV. Researchers found the most prominent barrier to vaccination was lack of information about the long-term efficacy and safety of the [vaccine](#), specifically for males.

"This study indicates that most parents would accept HPV vaccination for their sons just as readily as for daughters. Future research should explore the effects of the 2012 recommendations for routine vaccination for males on parental attitudes and uptake of HPV vaccination among both sexes," said Perkins.

Although race/ethnicity revealed no differences in parent/guardians' views towards vaccinating boys, minority study participants were more likely than white participants to support school-entry mandates, requiring children to receive the [HPV vaccine](#).

Results from this study suggest that low-income and minority parents/guardians are inclined to accept HPV vaccination for boys with the aim of protecting them from cancer and other diseases, but would like more information specifically related to HPV in males. More African-American (73 percent) and Latino (86 percent) than Caucasian (44 percent) participants supported school-entry mandates, but all feel that requirements should apply to both genders.

Provided by Boston University Medical Center

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