

# HPV prevalence 4.9 percent in tonsil tissue of healthy adults

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(HealthDay)—The prevalence of human papillomavirus (HPV) and of

high-risk HPV type 16 or 18 is 4.9 and 3.9 percent, respectively, in the tonsil tissue of healthy adults, according to a study published online Jan. 25 in *JAMA Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery*.

Katherine K.S. Rieth, M.D., from the University of Rochester Medical Center in New York, and colleagues conducted a retrospective cross-sectional study using samples obtained from tonsils that were archived following elective nononcologic tonsillectomy from 2012 to 2015. Formalin-fixed paraffin embedded samples of tumor-free tonsil [tissue](#) from 102 adults aged 20 to 39 years were included.

The researchers found that the overall prevalence of HPV was 4.9 percent and of high-risk type 16 or 18 HPV was 3.9 percent in tonsils from 102 otherwise healthy adults. In situ hybridization colocalized HPV virus to the biofilm of the tonsillar crypts in this sample population.

"Biofilm is present in the tonsillar crypts in a considerable proportion of tonsil tissues and may be reproducibly identified. Human papillomavirus is demonstrated to colocalize to the crypt [biofilm](#)," the authors write. "This has important implications with respect to the determination of HPV prevalence rates in the oropharynx. It may also play a role in the pathogenesis of HPV-related oropharyngeal carcinoma."

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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