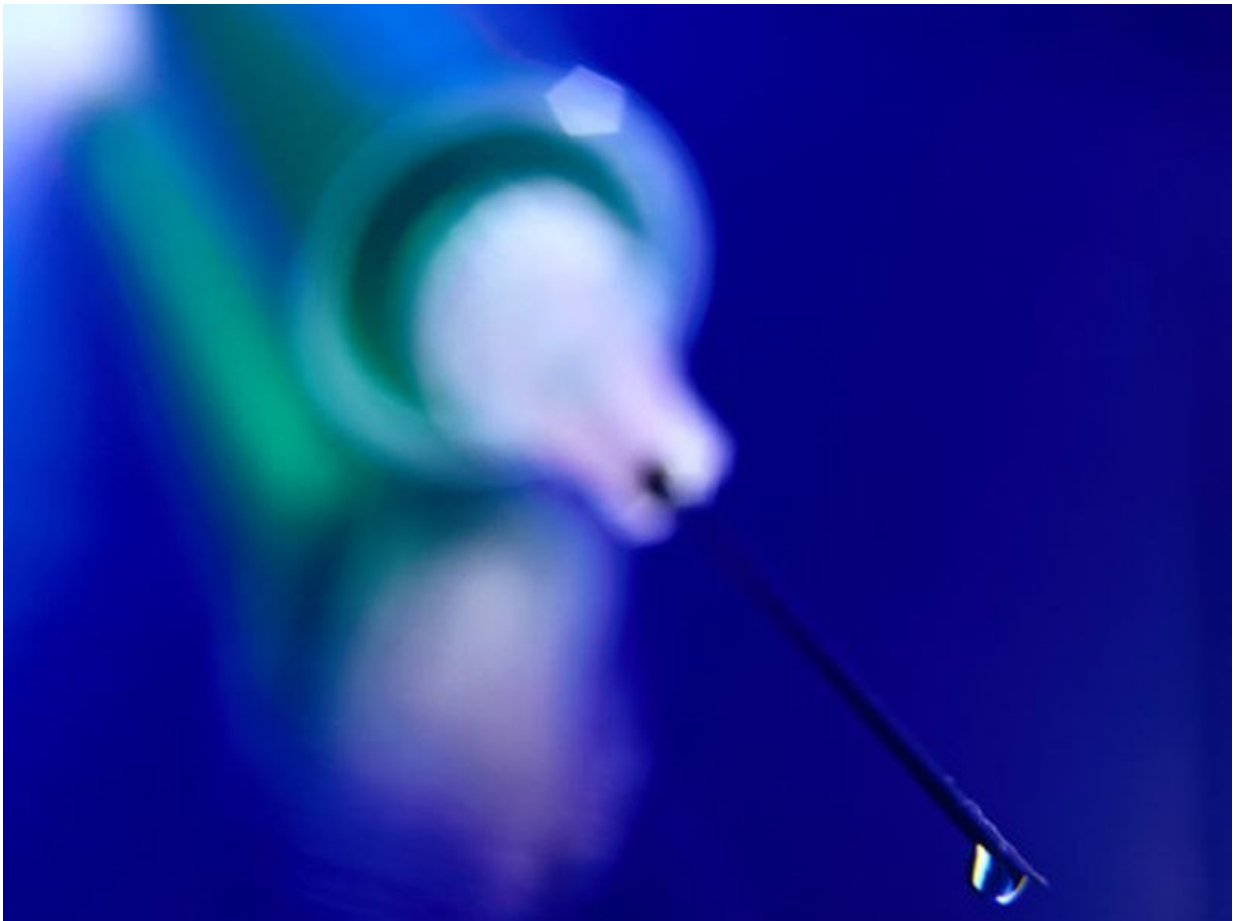


# HPV vaccine eliminates advanced skin cancer in 97-year-old

July 24 2018

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(HealthDay)—The 9-valent human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine could

be a therapeutic option for patients with cutaneous squamous cell carcinoma when surgical management is not an option, according to a case report published online July 3 in *JAMA Dermatology*.

A 97-year-old female patient had developed multiple cutaneous squamous cell carcinomas. On a hunch, her doctor, Anna Nichols, M.D., of the University of Miami's Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, tried an unorthodox approach—she injected each [tumor](#) with Gardasil, the HPV vaccine. The result: All the tumors completely and rapidly disappeared.

Nichols first administered two [vaccine doses](#) in the patient's arm. Several weeks later, additional injections were administered directly into some of the tumors. The treatment was applied a total of four times, spread out over an 11-month period. Less than a year following the initial direct-to-tumor vaccine injection, all of the treated tumors disappeared, Nichols said. What's more, over the two-year post-treatment period, there's been no skin cancer recurrence.

"We were surprised that all of the patient's tumors regressed," Nichols told *HealthDay*, "even those that were not directly injected with the HPV vaccine. This has never been reported until now." Many questions remain, of course. More testing is planned to reconfirm the vaccine's effectiveness against squamous cell carcinomas, Nichols said. It's unclear if it will prove similarly effective against other forms of skin cancer. But Nichols believes that the HPV vaccine "could be considered for carefully selected patients who have limited conventional treatment options."

Two coauthors of the case report disclosed a patent pending for this application of HPV [vaccine](#).

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

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