

# HPV vaccine coverage in children remains lower than prepandemic

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The percentage of children with up-to-date human papillomavirus (HPV)

vaccine coverage remains lower compared with pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels, according to a study published in the November issue of *Vaccine*.

Chun R. Chao, Ph.D., from Kaiser Permanente Southern California in Pasadena, and colleagues used [electronic medical records](#) to assess monthly volume of HPV [vaccine doses](#) administered among children aged 9 to 12.9 years and up-to-date coverage (percent vaccinated) by age 13 years between March 2019 and September 2021.

The researchers found that HPV vaccine doses administered in 2020 and 2021 have returned to the 2019 level after the initial drop during the beginning of the pandemic (March to April 2020). However, from March 2021 to September 2021, the average up-to-date coverage remained lower than the prepandemic level (54.8 versus 58.5 percent). Similar patterns were seen across race/ethnicity, neighborhood deprivation index, and HPV [vaccine coverage](#).

"System efforts for promoting childhood and adolescent vaccination during a pandemic are likely necessary to ensure adequate vaccination rates," the authors write. "Enhanced efforts are needed to bring back the HPV vaccination coverage level in children."

One author disclosed financial ties to the pharmaceutical industry.

**More information:** Chun R. Chao et al, Trends in HPV vaccine administration and HPV vaccine coverage in children by race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status during the COVID-19 pandemic in an integrated health care system in California, *Vaccine* (2022). [DOI: 10.1016/j.vaccine.2022.09.073](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.vaccine.2022.09.073)

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