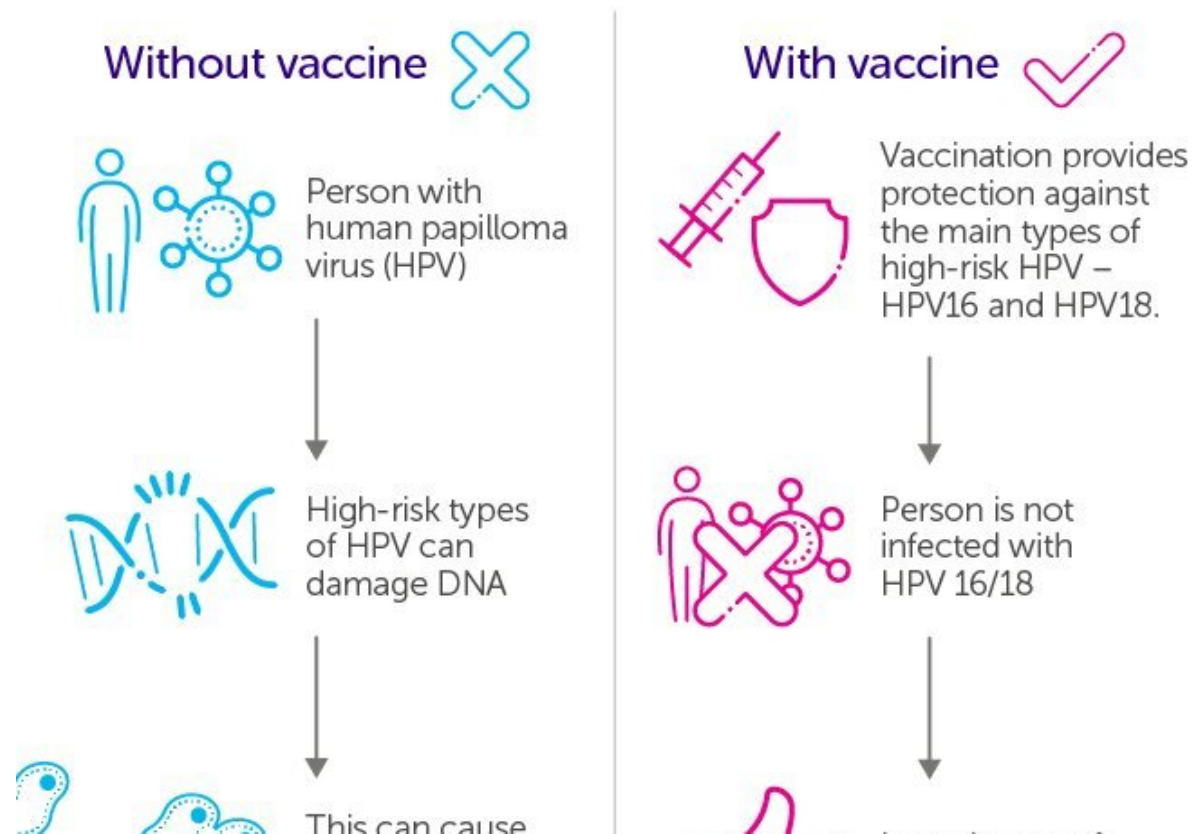


England moves to a single-dose HPV vaccine

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How does the HPV vaccine work?



Credit: Cancer Research UK

The HPV vaccination program in England is moving to a single-dose schedule from September 2023, the UK Health Security Agency

(UKHSA) has announced.

Multiple reviews of the available evidence have shown that a single dose of the [vaccine](#) is just as effective as two doses at preventing HPV-related cancers. The decision means children in England aged 12 to 13 will be offered one jab, rather than two.

The HPV vaccine has been part of the NHS routine vaccination schedule since 2008 and is one of the most successful in the world, with high uptake and millions of doses given. It has been given to boys as well as girls since 2019.

Preventing cancer in young people

Around eight in 10 people will get a [human papillomavirus](#) (HPV) infection at some point in their lives. For most people it doesn't cause any problems, but certain "high risk" types of HPV can lead to cancer.

HPV is the leading cause of cervical cancer, as well as most cancers of the vagina, vulva, penis and anus. It's also linked to some head and neck cancers. These are all relatively uncommon cancer types.

The HPV vaccine is an effective way to protect people from the highest risk HPV infections. That means they're much less likely to develop HPV-linked cancers.

A [study by our researchers in 2021](#) showed that cervical cancer rates were 87% lower in [young women](#) who had been eligible for HPV vaccination when they were aged 12 to 13 years.

Overall, the study estimated that the UK's HPV vaccination program prevented around 450 cancers and 17,200 pre-cancers in a little over a decade.

As senior author Professor Peter Sasieni told us last year, "It's nice to think that this next generation will probably never really have to worry about cervical [cancer](#) in this country."

Switching to a single dose HPV vaccine

This decision follows a review of evidence by The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunization (JCVI) over several years.

The move is also backed by the World Health Organization's Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization (SAGE), who published a review in April 2022 concluding that a single dose of HPV vaccine "delivers solid protection against HPV."

The change to a single dose makes it easier and more cost-effective for [young people](#) to get vaccinated. That could help save more lives around the world.

'Another step forward'

In England, the vaccine is also available to [older people](#) who have not already been vaccinated. People who were offered it in school remain eligible to receive it through the NHS until they turn 25.

Gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men (GBMSM) between 25 and 45 will continue to receive the two-dose vaccine through sexual health clinics. GBMSM under 25 who weren't offered the vaccine when they were in school will move to the single dose.

National Director for Screening and Vaccinations, Steve Russell, said, "This is another step forward for our world-leading HPV vaccination program, which saves lives by significantly reducing the risk of [cervical](#)

[cancer](#).

"With one quick HPV jab now making it simpler than ever to reduce your risk of cancers caused by the virus, it's so important that people come forward when invited."

Provided by Cancer Research UK

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