

# Parents increasingly cite safety concerns in HPV vaccine refusal

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(HealthDay)—Between 2015 and 2018, there was a 79.9 percent

increase in the proportion of parents who refused the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine for their adolescents owing to safety concerns, according to a study published online Sept. 17 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Kalyani Sonawane, Ph.D., from the UTHealth School of Public Health in Houston, and colleagues used data from the National Immunization Survey and Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System to assess trends in HPV vaccine safety concerns and spontaneous adverse event reporting for HPV vaccination from 2015 to 2018. The analysis included caregivers of 39,364 unvaccinated adolescents.

The researchers found that citing safety concerns as the primary reason for not initiating the HPV vaccine series increased from 13.0 percent in 2015 to 23.4 percent in 2018, or roughly an increase from 170,046 to 259,157 U.S. adolescents not initiating the vaccine because of safety concerns. In 30 states, the proportion of parents citing safety concerns as the main reason for HPV vaccine hesitancy increased, with the largest increases (>200 percent) seen in California, Hawaii, South Dakota, and Mississippi. During the study period, 16,621 adverse events were reported, with the adverse event reporting rate decreasing from 44.7 per 100,000 doses distributed in 2015 to 29.4 per 100,000 doses distributed in 2018. There was no change in the serious adverse event reporting rate, including those leading to hospitalizations, disability, life-threatening conditions, or death.

"These findings suggest an urgent need to combat [safety](#) concerns about the HPV [vaccine](#) in the United States," the authors write.

One author disclosed financial ties to Merck.

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