

Future you will thank you

The HPV vaccine is offered to all B.C. students in grade 6. If you missed it, it's not too late to catch up. [Find a vaccination location near you.](#)

The HPV vaccine protects against several cancers later in life. [HPV \(human papillomavirus\)](#) is a common infection that can cause various cancers, regardless of your sex, gender, or sexual orientation. Fortunately, there's a vaccine that guards against most cancer-causing types of HPV, and it's free for youth in B.C.



Why get the HPV vaccine?



It's free

The HPV vaccine is free for all youth in B.C. ages 9-18. It's offered in-school to students in grade 6, but if you missed it, you can still get the free vaccine from your pharmacy, public health unit, doctor, or community health nurse.

[See who's eligible](#)



It's safe

More than 200 million doses of the HPV vaccine have been given safely worldwide, with over 15 years of safety monitoring.

[See the evidence](#)



It's effective

When given at a young age, the HPV vaccine is nearly 100% effective at preventing infection of the most common types of HPV that can cause cervical cancer, other cancers, and genital warts.

[Get the details](#)

Common questions

Can I wait until I'm older to get the vaccine?

The vaccine can only prevent infection if you get it before you're exposed to HPV, and you've had enough time to build up antibodies. Studies show the vaccine is most effective when given to youth ages 9-14, but it's still worth it for older teens and adults. For your best chance of protection, don't wait.

Isn't the HPV vaccine just for girls?

No. It's important for youth of all genders to get the HPV vaccine. The vaccine was initially

recommended for females because it prevents most cervical cancers. Today, it's recommended that youth of all genders get the HPV vaccine to stop the spread of [several HPV-related cancers](#), not just cervical cancer.

How do we know the HPV vaccine is safe long-term?

More than 200 million doses of the HPV vaccine have been given safely worldwide. Serious adverse events are rare following HPV immunization. Over 15 years of safety monitoring show that the HPV vaccine is very safe and effective long-term.

I don't think I'm at-risk of getting HPV. Why should I get vaccinated?

HPV is very common. Most people who are not vaccinated will be infected with HPV at some point in their lives with mild or no symptoms, but sometimes, HPV infection can lead to life-threatening cancer. The good news? You can greatly reduce your risk of getting these kinds of cancers if you get the HPV vaccine early in life.

I missed getting the vaccine in grade 6. Is it too late to get it as a teenager?

It's not too late. The vaccine is still highly effective in older teens and young adults. Even if you've already been exposed to some strains of HPV, getting the vaccine will protect you from other potentially risky strains. Once you're a teen, the HPV vaccine is more effective the sooner you get it - so don't wait.

Do I need my parent's consent to get the HPV vaccine?

If you're over the age of 12, you can provide your own consent for immunizations. If you're 12 years of age or under and you understand the benefits and risks of the HPV vaccine, you [can legally consent to or refuse immunizations yourself](#).

Can't remember if you've already received the vaccine?

You can check your immunization history with the Health Gateway app. [Health Gateway](#) provides secure and convenient access to your health records in British Columbia. All you need is your B.C. Services Card or Personal Health Number to get started.

[See your vaccine history](#)

Book your HPV vaccine now

The HPV vaccine is more effective the sooner you get it. Contact your pharmacy, public health unit, primary care provider, or community health nurse to book.

Find a [public health unit or community health center](#) or a [pharmacy](#).

For non-emergency health information and advice in B.C. visit www.HealthLinkBC.ca or call **8-1-1** (toll-free). For the deaf and hard of hearing, call **7-1-1**. Translation services are available in more than 130 languages on request.