

For pupils and parents/guardians

Time for vaccination against HPV (human papillomavirus)

The vaccine against human papilloma virus is offered to all children in Norway in 7th grade at school. The aim is to prevent cancer caused by the virus. HPV spreads easily through sexual contact and most people will be infected by HPV at some point in their lives.

The HPV vaccine works by prevention. It gives the best protection when it is given to children/adolescents before they are exposed to infection. This is why the HPV vaccine is offered to children as part of the Norwegian Childhood Immunisation Programme in 7th grade, well before they become sexually active.

In most cases, HPV infections clear up by themselves within a few months. However, the virus can occasionally cause long-term infection. In rare cases, this may lead to pre-stages of cancer, or cancer itself.

The most common form of cancer caused by HPV is cervical cancer. HPV can cause cancer in the colon (anus), mouth and throat. It can also cause cancer in the vagina and external genitalia and in the penis. The HPV vaccine offers protection against these forms of cancer.

About the vaccine

The vaccine is given in the upper arm, in two doses with an interval of at least six months. There are several vaccines against HPV and the protection they give is considered equal. The vaccine used in the Norwegian Childhood Immunisation Programme is called Cervarix. As with all medicines, vaccines may cause unwanted effects. The most common from the HPV vaccine are swelling and redness at the site of the injection. Short-term fever, headache, tiredness, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea and stomach pain have also been reported. The HPV vaccine has not been shown to cause chronic or serious illness, or to increase the risk of these. Symptoms experienced after vaccination are not necessarily a reaction to the vaccine but may be signs of an illness that needs medical attention. Contact your doctor if you are concerned.

All vaccinations in the Norwegian Childhood Immunisation Programme are voluntary. Parents should listen to their child's opinion. Read more about the vaccine, how vaccination is carried out and about the effects of the vaccine and possible unwanted effects on the website: www.fhi.no/vaccine/HPV

Remember to tell the nurse

Inform the nurse if the child has immunological disease or is receiving medication that affect the immune system. You should also tell them if your child has had unusual reactions after previous vaccines or after received medication. If your child is getting allergy vaccination (hyposensitisation) any other vaccine less than one week before or after the HPV-vaccine, you should inform the nurse.

For more information go to <https://www.fhi.no/en/id/vaccines/childhood-immunisation-programme/>

The second dose is usually given at least six months after the first dose. The consent includes both doses. The nurse will let you know the dates for the second dose. Inform the nurse if there are any changes in your child's health or other reasons for not giving the second dose.