

For pupils and parents/guardians

Information on vaccination against HPV (human papillomavirus)

The vaccine against human papilloma virus (HPV) 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.

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 can lead to pre-stages of cancer, or cancer itself. HPV-related cancer can affect anyone, regardless of gender. The most common type of cancer caused by HPV is cervical cancer. HPV can also cause cancer in the colon (anus), mouth and throat, in the vagina, external genitalia and in the penis. The HPV vaccine offers protection against these types of cancer.

The HPV vaccine works preventative and 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.

About the vaccine

The vaccine is given in the upper arm, in two doses at least six months apart. There are several vaccines against HPV and the protection they give against cancer is considered equal. The vaccine used in the Norwegian Childhood Immunisation Programme is called Cervarix. As with all medicines, vaccines may cause unwanted effects. For the HPV-vaccine, the most common 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. You can find more information about ingredients and any side effects after vaccination with Cervarix at the Norwegian Medical Products Agency: [Legemiddelsøk](#) (only in Norwegian).

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: [Vaccine against HPV \(human papilloma virus\)](#)

Before vaccination – remember to inform the school nurse

Inform the nurse if the child has an immunological disease or is receiving medication that affects the immune system. You should also tell them if your child has any allergies or has ever had a severe allergic reaction, regardless of the cause. If your child is getting allergy vaccinations (hyposensitisation) or any other vaccine less than one week before or after the HPV-vaccine, you should inform the nurse.

The second dose is usually given at least six months after the first dose. This consent includes both doses. For the vaccines in the Childhood Immunisation Programme, consent from one of the parents or legal guardians is sufficient ([Lov om pasient- og brukerrettigheter §4-4 - Lovdata](#), only Norwegian).

The nurse will let you know the date for the second dose. Inform the nurse if there are any changes in your child's health between the 1st and 2nd dose.

Read more about the [Childhood Immunisation Programme](#).