

What you need to know about

HPV



Folkhälsomyndigheten
PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY OF SWEDEN

HPV is a very infectious virus that can lead to cancer later in life. Vaccination against HPV protects against cancer. All children are offered free vaccination by the school nurse in year 5 (ages 11-12).

Illnesses caused by HPV

HPV stands for human papillomavirus, which is transmitted through sexual contact. There are many different types of HPV, and some can lead to cancer later in life.

Most people will get some form of HPV infection at some point in their life, but many people are unaware of it as they can not feel or see it. HPV infection usually clears up by itself, but in some cases it can be long-lasting. Infection with HPV increases the risk later in life of cancer of the throat, cervix, genitals (vagina, vulva or penis) and anus.

Every year, around 800 women and 300 men in Sweden get some form of cancer linked to HPV infection.

HPV vaccination is preventive

HPV vaccination prevents infection by most of the HPV types that can cause cancer. To avoid infection, it is helpful to be vaccinated against HPV early in life, before adulthood and before becoming sexually active. If a person has already been infected by one or more types of HPV, the vaccination will not offer protection against those forms of the virus.

HPV vaccine is tried and tested

Millions of doses of the HPV vaccine have been given worldwide. Studies in Sweden and other countries have shown that the vaccine is effective and safe.

In Sweden, all HPV vaccinations are recorded in the national vaccination register. This means that it is easy to check that vaccination is safe and will continue to have the anticipated effect.

HOW THE VACCINATION WORKS

The school nurse administers the vaccine via an injection in the upper arm. The vaccine is given in two doses. There should be at least six months between the two doses.

Beforehand

Talk to the nurse at your child's school if you have any questions or queries about the vaccination.

Afterwards

It is common for the arm to be a little sore or itchy after the vaccination, and it may become red and/or swollen. Some people might briefly have a temperature, get a headache or feel generally unwell. Allergic reactions are very rare.

If your child seems unwell after the vaccination, please contact the school nurse or health care services.

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More information about HPV?

For more information in advance of HPV vaccination, please get in touch with the nurse at your child's school.

THE SWEDISH VACCINATION PROGRAMME

HPV vaccination is part of the Swedish vaccination programme. This diagram shows the vaccinations that are offered to all children in Sweden in order to prevent serious illnesses.

