

# Protect your child against human papillomavirus (HPV)

For Grade 7 students



## *Why your child should get vaccinated against HPV now...*

- To protect your child from getting human papillomavirus (HPV), which may cause genital warts, infections or cancer such as cervical cancer and oral cancer.
- To ensure the maximum benefit from the HPV vaccine. It is most effective when given to children aged 10 to 15 and BEFORE becoming sexually active.

## *Who should get this vaccine?*

Students in Grade 7.

## *Who should NOT get this vaccine?*

- Children who are allergic to any part of the vaccine or its packaging.
- Students who already received the vaccine.
- Pregnant women.

## *What you should know about HPV...*

- HPV is very common.
- There are more than 100 types of HPV.
- About 70 per cent of the adult population will have had a genital HPV infection at some stage in their life.
- Genital HPV is spread through skin-to-skin contact during sex.
- Signs and symptoms are not always visible.
- HPV can cause cervical cancer, other genital cancer, and cancer of the anus, head, neck, mouth and throat.
- Most people are infected during the first two to five years after becoming sexually active.

## *What you can do to help protect your child against HPV...*

- Encourage your child to get vaccinated NOW.
- Talk with your child about how to make informed sexual health decisions by discussing the following:
  - delaying sexual activity until an older age;
  - limiting the number of sexual partners;
  - being aware of a partner's sexual history;
  - using condoms for protection against HPV and other sexually transmitted infections; and
  - being aware that the virus can be found on skin that is not covered by a condom.

## *What you should know about the HPV vaccine...*

### *The vaccine...*

- is **SAFE** and a completed series is very effective in preventing disease.
- is given by a needle in two doses at least six months apart.
- children with a weakened immune system should receive three doses of HPV vaccine. Please talk to your healthcare provider.
- all doses need to be given to ensure protection.

### *What to expect following HPV immunization...*

- **Common side effects** are pain, redness, itching or swelling at the site of the injection.
- Other possible side effects are mild fever, nausea, vomiting, dizziness and headache.

**Please note:** As is the case with any vaccine, there is a small risk that a serious allergic reaction may occur. **Therefore, your child will be asked to remain on site for at least 15 minutes after the vaccine is given so that possible immediate reactions can be monitored and treated.**

### *How to treat fever and pain...*

- A cold compress on the injection site may reduce discomfort.
- You may give your child acetaminophen (e.g., Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (e.g., Advil®).
- **NEVER** give *Acetylsalicylic acid* (ASA or Aspirin®) to children younger than 18 years because it can cause a severe liver and brain disease called Reye's syndrome.

### *What else you should know...*

- If your child has a fever or illness other than a minor cold, the nurse may delay giving this vaccine.
- If your child's immune system is affected by illness, steroid medication or cancer treatments, the decision to immunize must be made in consultation with your family physician.
- If your child has had an allergic reaction to a vaccine in the past, or if you have any questions, please contact your local Public Health office.
- Adverse reactions especially severe or unusual reactions in the four weeks following immunization should be reported to the local Public Health office. Please see your doctor if your child has a severe reaction.
- Contact your health care provider if you have questions about immunization.
- Further information is available at [www.gnb.ca/publichealth](http://www.gnb.ca/publichealth)