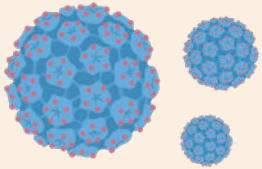
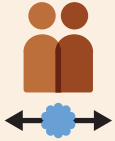
The HPV vaccine protects against cervical cancer

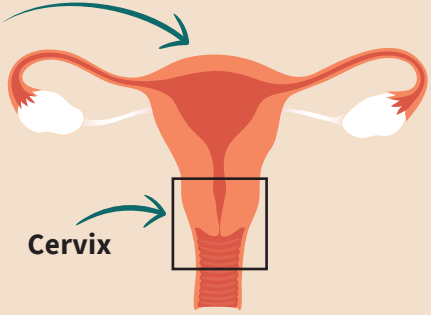


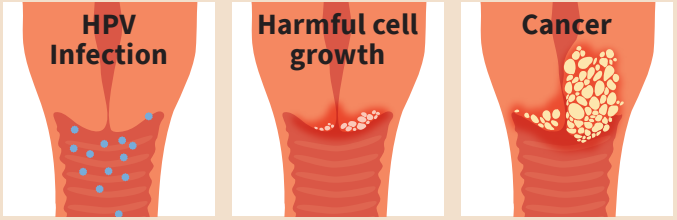
HPV (Human Papillomavirus) is a very common virus that causes more than 95% of cervical cancers.



HPV spreads through sexual contact.

The uterus is where babies grow.





Some types of HPV can cause cervical cancer in women.

The vaccine tells the body what HPV looks like, allowing it to prepare defenses to fight off the virus if it ever appears.

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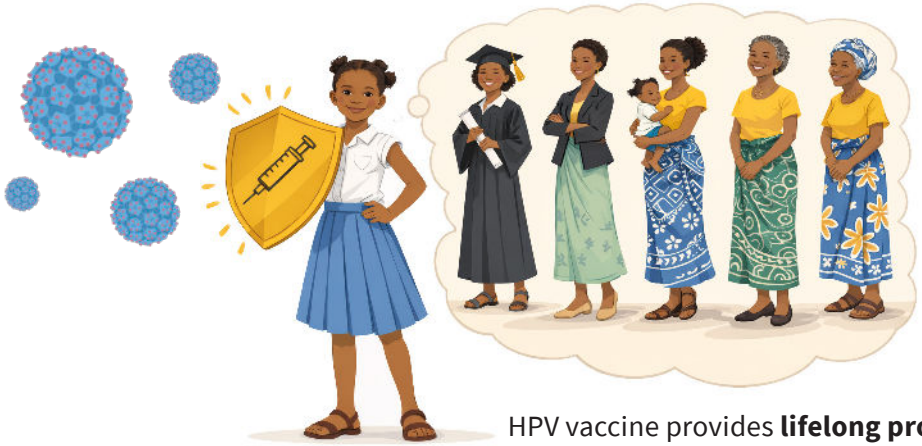
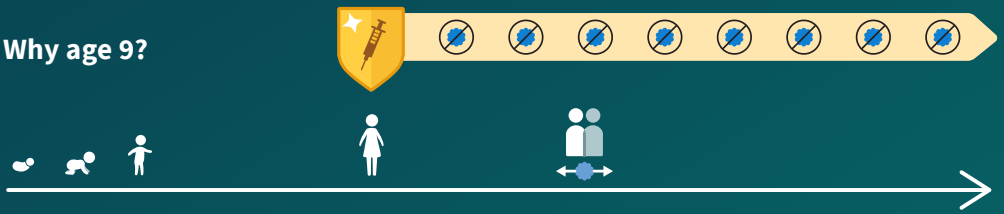
Who should get the HPV vaccine?

In Nigeria, the vaccine is recommended for all girls **at age 9.**

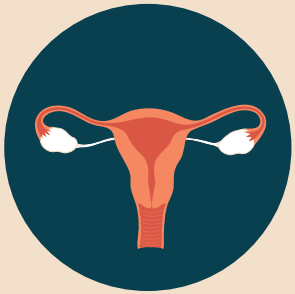


HPV vaccine provides **lifelong protection.**

Why age 9?



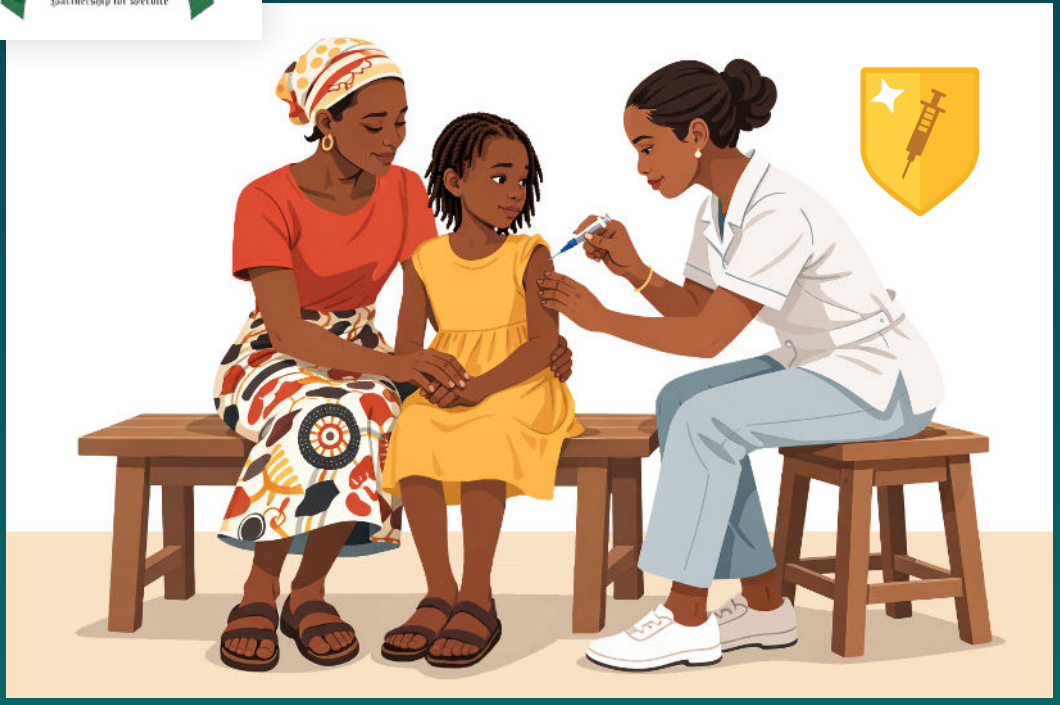
Vaccine works best when given before any risk of HPV exposure. Girls who get the vaccine now are protecting their future selves from HPV.



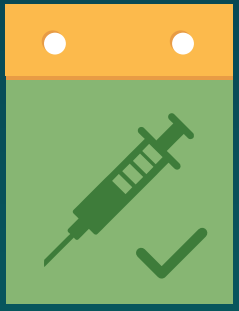
Why only girls?

Girls have a uterus and are therefore at risk of developing cervical cancer. HPV is more dangerous for girls, which is why the government currently prioritizes girls to get the vaccine.

What to expect when getting the HPV vaccine



It feels like a small pinch, but the pain lasts only for a short time.

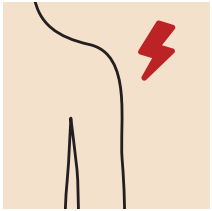


Most girls are fully protected after just 1 dose of the vaccine.

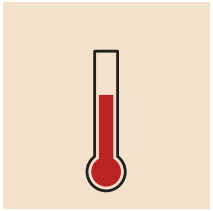
For some girls, health workers will recommend 2 doses.

Normal Vaccine Side Effects

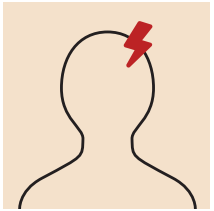
These mild, temporary symptoms may occur within 1-2 days. These are normal signs that the body is building protection and usually go away quickly.



Pain, redness or swelling where the injection was given



A mild fever



Headache or tiredness

Sore muscles or joints

Serious side effects are very rare. If a girl has serious side effects that last longer than a few days, she should visit the nearest health facility.

Can the vaccine give girls cancer?

No. The vaccine does not contain the live virus and cannot cause HPV infection or cancer. The vaccine is safe. It has been used for decades worldwide and is recommended by WHO.

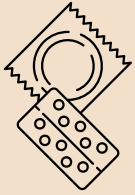
Why is the vaccine free?

Governments and partners pay for it because stopping cancer saves lives. Vaccines are very cheap compared to the cost of treating cancer if a girl is infected by HPV.

Vaccine Safety

The vaccine has been used safely for over 20 years. More than 100 million girls worldwide have received it. It has been thoroughly tested and recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO). Countries around the world use it to protect women from cervical cancer.

Common Questions

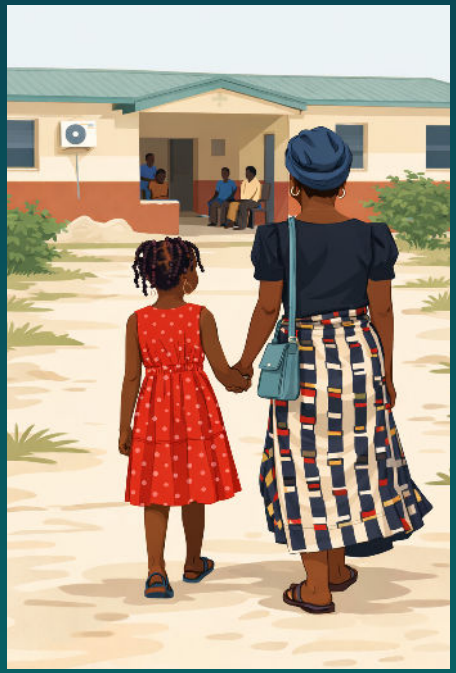


Is the HPV vaccine a contraceptive?
No, it is NOT a contraceptive. It does not prevent unwanted pregnancy.

Does the HPV vaccine cause infertility?
No, it does NOT cause infertility or affect menstruation. Instead, it helps protect the cervix and uterus.

How can families support HPV vaccination?

Talk to girls about the HPV vaccine, answer their questions, and give them advance permission to get vaccinated.



Bring girls to clinics or other community outreach sites to get the vaccine.

Reassure girls that the vaccine is safe and important and help them stay calm and comfortable during the injection.