

# The HPV vaccine

This vaccine is very good at preventing against cancer-causing HPV strains. Males and females should both get the HPV vaccine.

The vaccine has been linked to:

- **88% reduction** in HPV-related to oral infections
- **100% reduction** in OPC among vaccinated males

The vaccine is a very safe, easy and an effective way to prevent OPC and other HPV-related cancers.

## Who is eligible for the HPV vaccine?

**Anyone ages 9+ should get the HPV vaccine.**

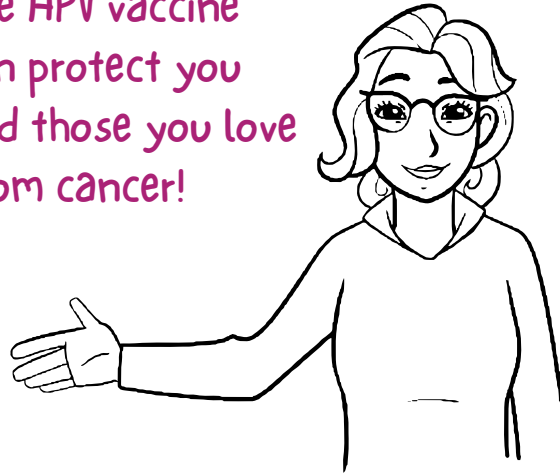
In Alberta, the vaccine is offered to **grade 6** and **grade 9** students. Anyone who did not receive the vaccine in school is eligible to receive the vaccine for free up to the age of 26.

If you do not know if you've been vaccinated, you can contact your healthcare provider or pharmacist.



## Did you know...

**the HPV vaccine can protect you and those you love from cancer!**



**Talk to your dental provider about the HPV vaccine today!**

## Learn more about HPV & cancer



**80%**  
sexually active adults  
have had one



**HPV INFECTION**



**Scan this QR code** with your phone camera to watch a video on HPV & cancer, and access some more resources on this topic!

**Visit [praxushealth.ca/dental](https://praxushealth.ca/dental) to learn more!**



**What you need to know about**

# HPV AND CANCER

Oropharyngeal cancer (OPC), is a type of cancer that affects the mouth and throat. This cancer is most commonly caused by a virus called human papillomavirus (HPV). It is preventable with a vaccine.

## What is HPV?

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is the most common sexually transmitted virus, and over **80% of sexually active adults will have an HPV infection** in their lifetime.

An HPV infection can cause:

- Oropharyngeal Cancer (OPC)
- Cervical Cancer
- Vaginal Cancer
- Penile Cancer
- Anal Cancer
- Vulvar Cancer
- Warts in the mouth or genitals

## HPV and OPC

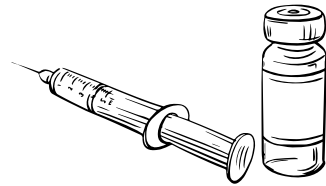
**70% of all OPC cases are caused by an HPV infection** and it can take between 10-30 years for this cancer to develop.

This type of cancer is on the rise in Canada. An estimated **5,800 males will be diagnosed** with head and neck cancer this year, and **1,550 will die** from it.

Those at **greatest risk** for OPC include:

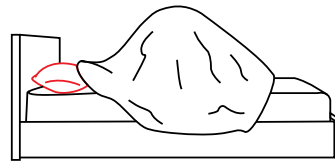
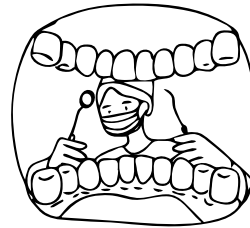
- Men
- People who became sexually active at a young age
- People who have had multiple sexual partners
- Immunocompromised people

## How can you prevent OPC?



**Get the HPV vaccine.**

**Frequent dental check-ups.**



**Practice safe sex.**

## What are OPC signs and symptoms?

The most common sign of OPC is a lump in the neck.

**Symptoms of OPC include:**

- Sore throat
- Sensation of something stuck in the throat
- Ear pain
- Trouble/pain when swallowing
- Change in voice



## How is OPC treated?

Head and neck cancer doctors treat people diagnosed with OPC. Treatment depends on where the cancer is located, and how early it is found.

Treatment may involve:

- Surgery
- Radiation
- Chemo



## What are the long-term effects of OPC?

Treatment for OPC is usually very good at removing the cancer and most people survive. OPC treatment is invasive and can leave life-long damage to the mouth and throat.

OPC survivors may be left unable to talk, eat, or swallow. Returning to work and social interactions can be very difficult.

