



EDITORIAL

WHY VACCINATE FOR HUMAN PAPILLOMA VIRUSES?

Viral Infections contribute to 15-20% of all human cancers, whereby several viruses play considerable roles in the multistage development of malignant cancers. Oncogenic viruses can facilitate various stages of carcinogenesis.

Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) is a virus that can be sexually transmitted and high risk HPV DNA is found to be present in 99.7% of cervical cancer specimens. Most people who get HPV infection actually clear the virus within 12 to 24 months of exposure. There are, however, a few strains of HPV that may persist in the body which then increases the risk of progression to cancer of the cervix.

The genotypes that persist, mainly 16 and 18, cause 70% of HPV related cervical cancer although most HPV genotypes will not cause cancer. There is also some synergy of HPV with smoking in cervical cancer causation. HPV also causes genital warts.

From 2006, vaccination against HPV became a reality. Vaccination targets four strains of HPV: HPV¹⁶, 11, 16 and 18. HPV6 and 11 cause genital warts.

Vaccination for HPV should therefore be encouraged and promoted among all young women as a way to reduce cancer of the cervix and anorectal warts in our society



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