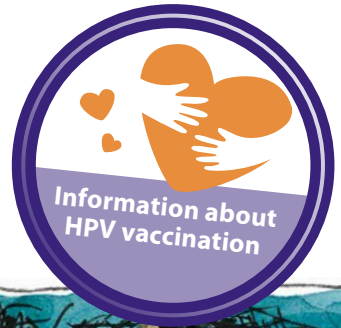


**HEALTH GUIDE** | HPV VACCINATION  
ENGLISCH



# HPV: the vaccination for young people



**MiMi**

Das Gesundheitsprojekt  
Mit Migranten  
für Migranten

**Ethno-  
Medizinisches  
Zentrum e.V.**



## Legal notice

Health Guide HPV Vaccination – HPV: the vaccination for young people

### Published by

Ethno-Medizinisches Zentrum e.V. (Ethno-Medical Centre Inc., EMZ)  
Königstraße 6, 30175 Hannover | Germany

### Editorial team and content quality assurance:

Ramazan Salman, Matthias Wentzlaff-Eggebert, Elena Kromm-Kostjuk

**Graphic design:** eindruck.net, 30175 Hannover

**Illustrations:** deanhills.com, 55130 Mainz

**Translation:** Ethno-Medizinisches Zentrum e.V.

### How to order:

Order online at [www.hpv-impfung-mehrsprachig.de](http://www.hpv-impfung-mehrsprachig.de) | [www.mimi.bayern](http://www.mimi.bayern)  
Email: [bestellportal@ethnomed.com](mailto:bestellportal@ethnomed.com) | [salman@ethnomed.com](mailto:salman@ethnomed.com)  
Download available at [www.hpv-impfung-mehrsprachig.de](http://www.hpv-impfung-mehrsprachig.de)  
Mail order service: Ethno-Medizinisches Zentrum e.V., Königstraße 6, 30175 Hannover

### Available in a range of languages

**URL links:** The content of any external pages for which links are provided here is the responsibility of the respective provider.

This guide is intended for a broad public audience. However, to protect the accuracy of the content, all rights are reserved. Any use other than that permitted under the law requires the publisher's prior written permission.

**Version:** 2022

We thank MSD SHARP & DOHME GMBH for their kind support in making this brochure available.

With support from:



## Dear readers,

*most people become infected with human papillomavirus (HPV) at least once in their lives. Most HPV infections pass without symptoms and resolve on their own within a year. However, in some cases they can lead to certain precancerous conditions, and even cancers.*

*In Germany alone, around 7,850 people contract cancer caused by HPV infection each year.*

*One of the most important preventive measures against HPV-related cancers is vaccination. However, a survey conducted by MSD in Europe shows that many parents are unaware of it.*

*We are involved with the 'ENTSCHIEDEN.Gegen Krebs' (DETERMINED. Against cancer.) initiative and want to contribute to promoting awareness of HPV together with doctors, health insurance funds, and health care agencies.*

*This guide makes an important contribution to this effort. HPV infections can affect anyone – regardless of their origin, culture, or language.*

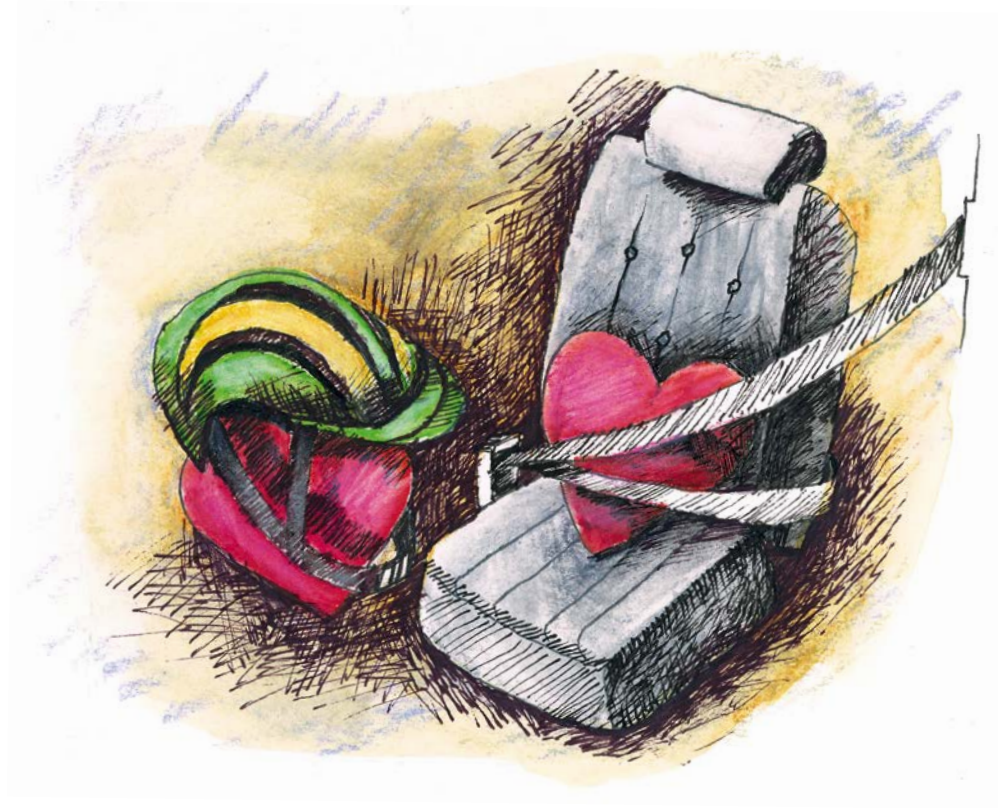
*To help parents and young people decide about HPV vaccination, we have summarised the important information and translated it into a range of languages.*

Ramazan Salman,  
Managing Director, Ethno-Medizinisches  
Zentrum e.V. (Ethno-Medical Centre)

Dr Ahmed Khalifa,  
Medical Director,  
MSD Sharp & Dohme GmbH

## Contents

▶	Important facts in brief	7
▶	Dear parents	8
▶	Dear young people	10
▶	Things to know about human papillomavirus (HPV)	12
	What is human papillomavirus?	
	How do people get infected with HPV?	
	How does cancer develop after HPV infection?	
	Which cancers can HPV infection cause?	
	What other disease can HPV infection cause?	
▶	Things to know about HPV vaccination	14
	How do the vaccines work?	
	How safe is the vaccine?	
	Possible side effects	
	Why does age play a role in HPV vaccination?	
	What does vaccination involve?	
	Where can you get vaccinated?	
▶	For doctors	18
▶	Information sources	20



## Important facts in brief

- ▶ Some forms of cancer, among them cervical cancer and anal cancer, are caused by infections with certain types of human papillomavirus (HPV). Globally, around one in 20 newly diagnosed cancers are linked to HPV.
- ▶ HPV is very common around the globe, and is transmitted through intimate body contact.
- ▶ **HPV vaccination early in life can prevent certain HPV-related cancers.**
  - ▶ Children should receive the vaccination as early as possible. It is recommended for all young people between 9 and 14 years, regardless of their gender.
  - ▶ Those who have not yet been vaccinated can catch up until the age of 17 and even later.
  - ▶ The vaccination is available from any doctor you trust, but especially from general practitioners, as well as in child & adolescent health and gynaecological practices.
  - ▶ Statutory health insurance funds, and usually also private health insurance funds, cover the costs of vaccination until the age of 17 years. Some also do so for older individuals by negotiation.

Across all cultural differences, we humans have in common that we, over the course of our lives, enter intimate relationships. This can lead to infection with HPV, which in turn can cause certain HPV-related cancers.

**Today, we can do something for the future health of our young people: if we ensure that they receive their HPV vaccination in time, we can protect them against certain HPV-related cancers.**



## Dear parents,

it goes without saying that you take care of your children's health and protect them from unnecessary danger.

Your children will probably have been vaccinated against a range of diseases already, e.g. against measles, mumps, rubella, and whooping cough.

In most cases, these vaccinations are made available as part of the **'U-Untersuchungen'** (scheduled preventive health checks) in early childhood.

In contrast, the vaccination against infection with human papillomavirus (HPV) is not given until the age of 9 to 14 years. At that age, children don't tend to see a doctor very often.

This is why you are encouraged to make HPV vaccination a routine part of your child's preventive health care. Make sure

your child receives this vaccination in time.

HPV vaccination is recommended by the STIKO (Standing Committee on Vaccination) for all young people aged 9 to 14 years, regardless of their gender.

When it was first introduced, prevention of cervical cancer was the main reason. Therefore, mainly girls and other young people with a womb received this vaccination initially.

By now it has become clear that boys should also be vaccinated – to prevent certain HPV-related cancers.

This also creates mutual protection from infection, which can occur during intimate body contact later in life.

Don't hesitate to obtain information from a doctor you trust, and make an appointment for HPV vaccination.

The 'J1' preventive adolescent health check for young people between the ages of 12 and 14 also provides an opportunity to complete the HPV vaccination schedule before the 15th birthday.

Just ask your doctor about it! You can also take information material with you – for example this brochure – and use it to bring up the topic of vaccination with your doctor.

## „Another step ...

Age	Preventive health care
0	▶ Antenatal health checks during pregnancy (entered into the 'Mutterpass' maternal health passport)
0–6	▶ U1 to U9 early childhood preventive health checks (entered into the 'U-Untersuchungsheft' booklet) and examinations for the early detection of dental, oral and mandibular diseases
from age 6	▶ Regular preventive dental health checks (entered into the 'Bonusheft' health insurance bonus booklet from age 12)
<b>9–17</b>	▶ <b>HPV vaccination (ages 9 to 14) or HPV catch-up vaccination (ages 15 to 17)</b>
12–14	▶ J1 preventive adolescent health check
20–34	▶ Annual early detection test for cervical cancer (Pap smear)
from age 35	▶ Pap smear and HPV test every three years

... into healthy adulthood!

## Yes, but ...

Perhaps you are concerned that HPV vaccination might cause your child to become interested in sexual contact prematurely. But scientific studies show that HPV-vaccinated young people have neither an earlier sexual debut nor more sexual partners than those who are unvaccinated.

Also, you don't have to necessarily mention sexuality when you talk to your child about HPV vaccination.

On the other hand, HPV vaccination is a good opportunity to address the topic of intimacy. This way you can demonstrate that you not only care about your child's health, but also their piece of mind during their sexual development. This can strengthen the trust between you. Studies also show: the better young people are informed, the longer they wait with exploring their own sexuality.





## Dear young people,

You think cancer is an issue that only concerns adults? It's nearly always true: in most cases, the cancers that can be caused by HPV appear years or even decades after infection.

HPV is so common that most of the global population becomes infected at some point in their lives.

The virus is transmitted directly via the skin and mucous membranes, and therefore through intimate body contact, including during sex. Even condoms can't reliably prevent infection. But they are still important because they can protect from other sexually transmissible infections.

No one can predict in which individuals infection with HPV will later lead to cancer. But you can prevent certain HPV-related diseases right now: by getting vaccinated.

The HPV vaccination is comparable to wearing a seat belt: it makes sense to always buckle up. No one can know when and where a dangerous situation may arise, no matter how careful the driver is!

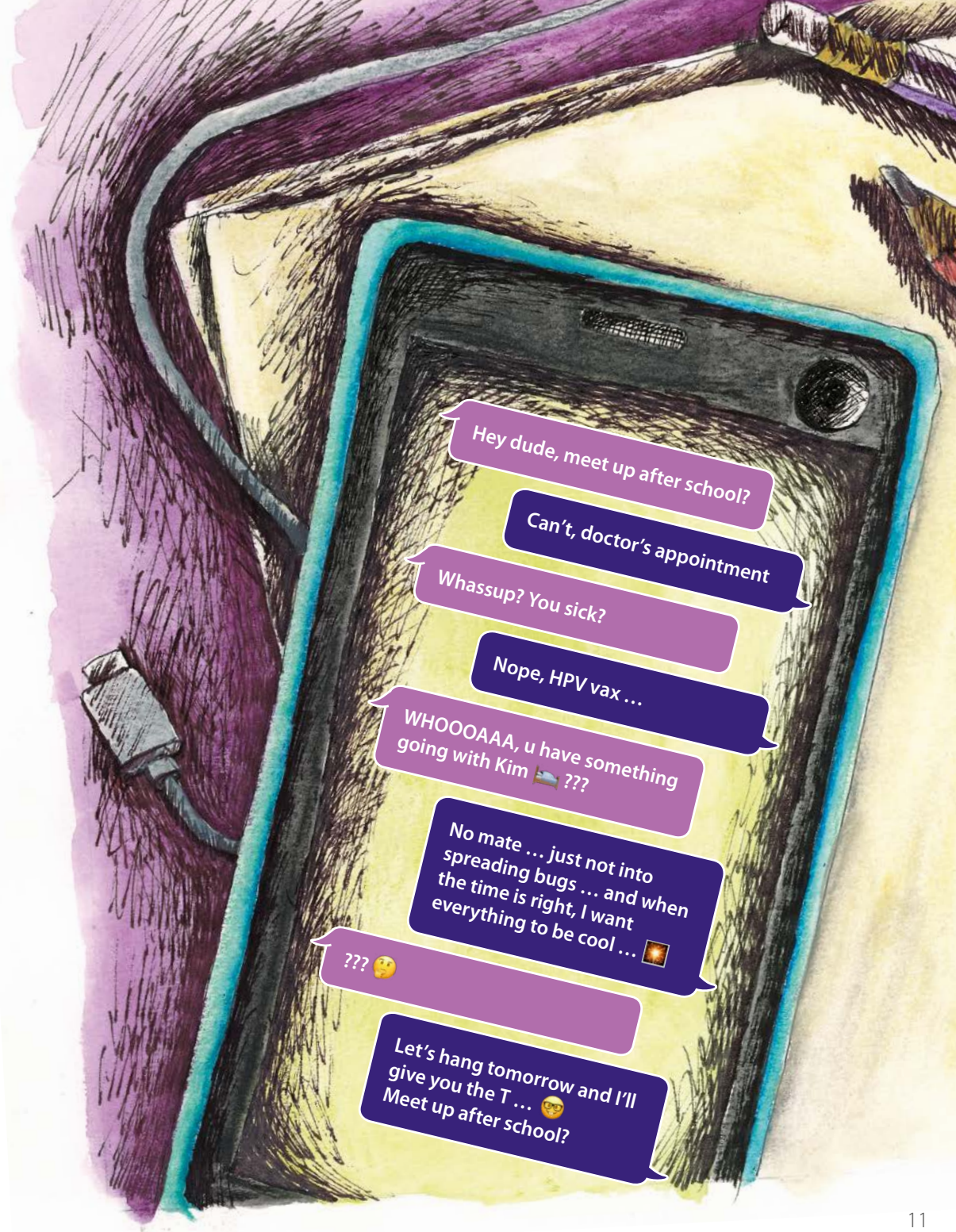
The vaccination is most effective before the person first comes into contact with the virus. This means before the person has sex for the first time. Also, the immune system develops a stronger response in young people.

Because HPV has to do with sex as well, you might find this topic a little embarrassing. And you may not want others' comments to make you uncomfortable. But getting vaccinated now doesn't mean you are thinking about intimate relationships, or what kind of intimacy you might want at a later stage.

The same way that wearing a seatbelt says nothing about when or where you might drive!

You can get the HPV vaccination from any doctor you trust. The **'J1' preventive adolescent health check** is one good opportunity. It's a free health check for young people aged 12 to 14.

You can go to the J1 by yourself, or with a friend or someone else you'd like to accompany you. You can also choose the doctor's practice you go to. There are practices specialising in child and adolescent health. But you can also see a general practitioner. You should have your Gesundheitskarte (electronic health care card) and your Impfpass (vaccination passport) with you for the health check.





## Things to know about human papillomavirus (HPV)

### What is human papillomavirus?

Viruses are microscopically small particles. Mostly, they only consist of genetic material and a few proteins. Viruses enter certain cells in the body tissue. They cause the cell to produce the building blocks for more viruses. These leave the cell and can then infect additional cells.

Human papillomavirus infects cells in the skin and mucous membranes. Mucous membranes are the moist, hairless areas of skin, e.g. in the mouth, nose, anus, and on parts of the genitals.

### How do people get infected with HPV?

Human papillomavirus is very common across the population. It is transmitted directly via the skin and mucous membranes.

People mostly get infected through intimate body contact. The virus is transmitted e.g. during intense kissing, petting, oral sex, and sexual intercourse. Condoms only provide limited protection.

In rare cases, the infection is also transmitted during birth.

### How does cancer develop after HPV infection?

So far, scientists have discovered about 200 different types of human papillomavirus. Some of them can affect skin cells and mucous membrane cells in the genital area.

HPV infection usually goes unnoticed. There is no effective treatment for it. However, in most cases it resolves by itself without symptoms. But sometimes it persists for longer, and then it can trigger certain types of cancer later.

The types of HPV that can trigger cancer are called **high-risk types**. If an infection with these virus types persists for longer than 12 months, tissue changes can occur in the mucous membrane. The more dangerous of these kinds of changes are considered **precancerous**. They may develop later, on average three to six years after infection.

After 10 to 30 years, cancer results in about 50 percent of cases if such precancerous conditions are not treated.

### Which cancers can HPV infection cause?

**Cervical cancer** is the fourth most common cancer worldwide. Almost 100 percent of cases are due to certain cancer-causing types of HPV. Types of HPV also cause 90 percent of all cases of anal cancer. HPV-related cancerous tumours can also develop in the vagina and on the vulva (labia).

In cervical cancer, the tumours develop from tissue changes on the outer part of the cervix, which extends into the vagina. It is therefore important to regularly attend **cervical screening** (Pap smear) for early detection. For this test, mucous membrane cells are collected from the cervix and examined for any changes.

### What other disease can HPV infection cause?

Certain types of HPV can cause **genital warts**. These are mostly benign skin growths that may occur in the genital area after infection with HPV. They are often only a few millimetres high and initially occur as individual nodules.

They may spread later and form small clusters. Sometimes they cause itching and a burning sensation.

While genital warts are mostly harmless, people often find them uncomfortable. They can be treated medically or removed surgically.



## Things to know about HPV vaccination

The realisation that some cancers can be the result of HPV infection was an important scientific breakthrough. The researcher Harald zur Hausen received the Nobel Prize for it in 2008.

Thanks to the development of HPV vaccines, now a vaccination is available for the first time to protect against some cancers.

The HPV vaccination represents great progress in cancer prevention because it can reduce the risk of cancers, including cervical, vulval, and anal cancer, as well as their precursors.

Scientific studies show that the frequency of HPV infections with high-risk types and the related tissue changes in the genital area have dropped significantly among vaccinated persons.

### How do the vaccines work?

HPV vaccines contain virus-like particles. This material has certain characteristics of the human papillomavirus. The immune system recognises these. The vaccine particles themselves are unable to multiply, and therefore also unable to cause disease. But the immune system still responds to them by forming antibodies. The antibodies are then ready to mount a defence when real human papillomavirus enters the body. The immune system can use the antibodies to prevent infection.

The currently available vaccines counter the most important high-risk types. Depending on the vaccine used, HPV vaccination can protect from certain HPV-related precancerous conditions and carcinomas of the cervix, the vulva, the vagina, and the anus, as well as from genital warts.

### HPV vaccination works!

In England, infections with high-risk types decreased by 80 % in young female persons aged 16 to 18.

In Denmark, precancerous conditions of the cervix decreased by 40 percent in people aged under 23 years.

In Sweden, the risk of cervical cancer decreased by 88 % in people vaccinated before age 17.

In Australia, genital warts were reduced by 90% through vaccination for women and girls.



### How safe is the vaccine?

The HPV vaccines currently on the market are generally seen as well-tolerated. The safety profile of HPV vaccines is constantly monitored by national – such as the Paul Ehrlich Institute (PEI) – as well as international health authorities.

The Ständige Impfkommision STIKO (Standing Committee on Vaccination), on the other hand, carefully weighs up the advantages and disadvantages of a vaccination and makes recommendations for their use. Like all other medical interventions, vaccinations can have unwanted side effects. For the STIKO to recommend a vaccination, possible side effects must

be so mild or rare that its advantages for health are markedly greater.

### Possible side effects

In principle, side effects can occur with all vaccinations. For those that are administered as injections, they are mostly mild and of short duration:

- Reddening, swelling, or pain at the injection site
- Dizziness, circulatory problems (mostly out of fear of the needle, or when stressed)
- Raised temperature, nausea, headache, fatigue



### Why does age play a role in HPV vaccination?

The STIKO recommends HPV vaccination for young people of all genders aged 9 to 14 years so that it takes place before a possible infection with HPV. Moreover, the younger the person who is vaccinated, the better the immune system can respond to the vaccination.

If they haven't got vaccinated against HPV yet, young people of all genders can and should do so even after their first sexual intercourse.

Even in individuals who have already had intimate body contact, i.e. who may have already been exposed to certain types of HPV, the vaccination can still provide protection from other HPV types.

The earlier catch-up vaccination occurs, the better.

However, HPV vaccination doesn't protect from all HPV types that can cause cancer or genital warts. It therefore remains important to participate in regular screening for the early detection of cancer.

### What does vaccination involve?

The HPV vaccination schedule for young people ages 9 to 14 consists of two vaccine doses. The two vaccine doses are injected into the upper arm at least five months apart.

In some cases, however, three doses are required. For example, when the vaccination schedule isn't started until after the 15th birthday, or if the interval between the first and second dose was shorter than five months.

Young people who haven't received the vaccination before their 15th birthday should preferably catch up by their 18th birthday. It is best to complete the HPV vaccination schedule before the person has their first intimate body contacts.

### Where can you get vaccinated?

HPV vaccination is available mainly in general, gynaecological, and urological practices, but in principle in very many medical practices.

Statutory health insurance funds, and usually also private health insurance funds, cover the costs for young people between 9 and 17 years. Some health insurance funds also cover HPV vaccination for individuals over the age of 18 years.

The vaccination is also available as part of the 'J1' Jugendgesundheitsuntersuchung (preventive adolescent health check) for young people aged 12 to 14 years.

The J1 is available e.g. in practices specialising in child and adolescent health, as well as from general practitioners.

Young people can come to the appointment by themselves, or with an accompanying person of their choice. They must bring their Gesundheitskarte (electronic health care card) and their Impfpass (vaccination passport) if they have one.



## For doctors

The Ständige Impfkommision STIKO (Standing Committee on Vaccination) now recommends HPV vaccination for young people of all genders, beginning with the 9–14 year age group. Catch-up vaccination is available until the 18th birthday.

Still, the proportion of those who have received the complete HPV vaccination schedule remains far too low in Germany. According to the RKI, in 2019 it was 47.2% among 15-year olds that were counted as female, and only 5.2% among those

counted as male. Among 18-year-olds, it was 52 percent (counted as female) and 2.5 percent (counted as male).

However, required is a minimum vaccination rate among young people of all genders of 70 percent. Denmark, for example, has already reached this rate, even without a school-based vaccination programme.

Hopefully, the demand for HPV vaccination from young people and their parents will increase in the future.

We depend on your contribution as a doctor to increase the vaccination rate.

- Please actively draw attention to HPV vaccination and recommend it.
- Please also correct misinformation – but take any fears seriously, and deal with the topic in a culturally sensitive manner.
- Please respond positively to their inquiries and ensure low-threshold access to HPV vaccination.

This guide, which is available in a range of languages, as well as the STIKO's vaccination calendar, are available to assist you in your conversations with parents and patients.

**This health guide is available in a range of languages at**

[www.hpv-impfung-mehrsprachig.de](http://www.hpv-impfung-mehrsprachig.de)

**The STIKO's vaccination calendar is available at**

[www.rki.de/DE/Content/Infekt/Impfen/Impfkalender/Impfkalender\\_node.html](http://www.rki.de/DE/Content/Infekt/Impfen/Impfkalender/Impfkalender_node.html)

### "But I already treat everyone the same ..."

Culturally sensitive communication is an important prerequisite for people with very different cultural backgrounds to benefit equally from health services. They must feel respected in order to trust their doctor's advice. This requires more than treating all patients equally.

It is about jointly overcoming the additional barriers that many people with a migration biography are facing.

To work in a culturally sensitive manner means:

- Taking one's time
- Being aware of how cultural conditioning, stereotypes, and prejudices shape our own behaviour as well as the intercultural situations we encounter
- Demonstrating openness, listening, asking questions, and gathering information about the cultural context
- Making use of interpreting services or team members with language skills
- Using plain language: short sentences, replacing or explaining specialised terms, avoiding abbreviations, using examples relevant to everyday life





## Information sources

The internet offers many reliable information sources about HPV vaccination, some of them also in your language of origin. You can also ask your health insurance fund, or talk to a doctor you trust.

**Berufsverband der Frauenärzte e. V.**  
(BVF, Professional Association of Gynaecologists)  
[www.frauenaerzte-im-netz.de](http://www.frauenaerzte-im-netz.de)

**Berufsverband der Kinder- und Jugendärzte e. V.**  
(BVKJ, Association of Child and Adolescent Physicians)  
[www.kinderaerzte-im-netz.de/startseite](http://www.kinderaerzte-im-netz.de/startseite)

**Berufsverband Deutscher Urologen e. V.**  
(BDU, Professional Association of German Urologists)  
<https://urologie-gestalten.de/patienteninformationen/#hvp>

**Bundesministerium für Gesundheit**  
(BMG, Federal Ministry of Health)  
[www.bundesgesundheitsministerium.de/themen/praevention/frueherkennung-vorsorge/frueherkennung-von-gebaermutterhalskrebs.html](http://www.bundesgesundheitsministerium.de/themen/praevention/frueherkennung-vorsorge/frueherkennung-von-gebaermutterhalskrebs.html)

**Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung**  
(BZgA, Federal Centre for Health Education)  
[www.liebesleben.de/fachkraefte/praevention-aerztliche-praxis/materialien-hpv/eltern](http://www.liebesleben.de/fachkraefte/praevention-aerztliche-praxis/materialien-hpv/eltern)  
[www.impfen-info.de](http://www.impfen-info.de)

**Deutsche Krebsgesellschaft e. V.**  
(DKG, German Cancer Society)  
[www.krebsgesellschaft.de/onko-internetportal/basis-informationen-krebs/krebsarten/andere-krebsarten/gebaermutterhalskrebs/vorbeugung.html](http://www.krebsgesellschaft.de/onko-internetportal/basis-informationen-krebs/krebsarten/andere-krebsarten/gebaermutterhalskrebs/vorbeugung.html)

**Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum**  
(dkfz, German Centre for Cancer Research)  
[www.dkfz.de/de/krebspraevention/WzK\\_2021\\_Von-der-HPV-Infektion-zum-Krebs.pdf](http://www.dkfz.de/de/krebspraevention/WzK_2021_Von-der-HPV-Infektion-zum-Krebs.pdf)

**Robert Koch Institute (RKI)**  
[www.rki.de/DE/Content/Infekt/Impfen/Materialien/Materialien\\_HPVPfimpfung\\_Tab.html](http://www.rki.de/DE/Content/Infekt/Impfen/Materialien/Materialien_HPVPfimpfung_Tab.html)  
[www.rki.de/SharedDocs/FAQ/Impfen/HPV/FAQ-Liste\\_HPVPfimpfen.html](http://www.rki.de/SharedDocs/FAQ/Impfen/HPV/FAQ-Liste_HPVPfimpfen.html)

**Vaccination calendar of the Ständige Impfkommision**  
(STIKO, Standing Committee on Vaccination)  
[www.rki.de/DE/Content/Infekt/Impfen/Impfkalender/Impfkalender\\_node.html](http://www.rki.de/DE/Content/Infekt/Impfen/Impfkalender/Impfkalender_node.html)

**World Health Organization (WHO)**  
[www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/cervical-cancer](http://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/cervical-cancer)

**Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Gesundheit und Pflege**  
(StMGP, Bavarian State Ministry for Health and Care)  
[www.stmgp.bayern.de/vorsorge](http://www.stmgp.bayern.de/vorsorge)





# HPV: the vaccination for young people

In Germany alone, around 7,850 people contract cancer caused by HPV infection each year. One of the most important preventive measures against HPV-related cancers is vaccination.

To help parents and young people decide about HPV vaccination, we have summarised the important information and translated it into a range of languages.

Topics covered in this guide include:

- Things to know about human papillomavirus (HPV)
- Things to know about HPV vaccination
- Why does age play a role in HPV vaccination?

You can download the 'HPV: the vaccination for young people' health guide or order hard copies on our website at [www.hpv-impfung-mehrsprachig.de](http://www.hpv-impfung-mehrsprachig.de)



This health guide was received from: