

HPV VACCINATION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What vaccine is being offered and why?

The Gardasil 9 vaccine protects against Human Papillomavirus (HPV) which can cause most cervical cancers (more than 70% in the UK), some anal and genital cancers, and some cancers of the head and neck. The vaccine also protects against genital warts. The vaccine does not protect against all of the other cancer-causing types of HPV, so it's vital that women still go for routine cervical screening tests when they are older. For the Patient Information Leaflet and further information, please visit: [Gardasil 9 suspension for injection - Patient Information Leaflet \(PIL\) - \(emc\) \(medicines.org.uk\)](#)

Why is the vaccine given at 12 or 13 years of age?

HPV is spread by someone having sex or being sexually intimate with another who has the virus. Whilst most young people don't start having sex until they are 16 or over, it has been shown the vaccine provides the best protection if given at 12 – 13 years of age as the immune response is better. It is still important to have the vaccine even if a young person is sexually active as it can provide protection against any of the HPV types in the vaccine they have not been exposed to.

I consented last year and my child missed the vaccination in school, what happens now?

If your child in year 9 or above has not since attended one of our community catch up clinics for this vaccination, please be aware that as you consented to this, and your child did not receive it within the same school year, we will hold your consent on record and offer the vaccination to them in subsequent school years. This is referred to as 'out of cohort vaccinations'.

You will be contacted prior to the out of cohort vaccinations being offered in school, unless you have contacted us to change your consent to no.

If you consented no, you can contact us to change your consent to a yes at any time.

Tips for vaccination day - Wear clothes that would allow the nurses to access the top of the arm, such as a short sleeved shirt/T shirt. They should have breakfast as usual and ensure that they have plenty to drink throughout the day.

What are the potential side effects following vaccination?

Following vaccination the young person may experience fever, aches, headache, nausea or tiredness. This is an expected immune response which can be treated with paracetamol or ibuprofen (never aspirin for under-16s); always follow the directions on the packet. It's common to get some swelling, redness or tenderness at the injection site. Sometimes a small painless lump develops, but this usually disappears in a few weeks. Any other side effects are unusual. If you're worried about any reaction you can call the NHS 111 service. Please inform us or your GP if your child has any side effects other than those listed above following vaccination.

Can older students be vaccinated too?

Catch up is available in school or in one of our community clinics, for students in years 9 to 13 who have not yet received one dose of the HPV vaccination. This is by prior arrangement, with the Immunisation Service. However, the vaccine is not available on the NHS for males born before 01/09/2006.

How will I know when my child has been vaccinated?

You will receive an email, usually within 24 hours, sent to the address you provide when completing the online form, advising you of the vaccination outcome. If your child was not vaccinated, following submission of a positive consent form, your email will advise of the reason for this and contain details of how to book into a clinic.

Links to vaccination resources:

[Why vaccination is safe and important - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

Information for parents on the HPV vaccination programme:

[The universal HPV immunisation programme \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

[Easy read guide to the HPV vaccination \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

What do I do if I cannot complete the online consent form?

Contact your local team in the Immunisation Service on the number provided, and complete a verbal consent with them, **before the closing date and time.**

What do I do if I missed the cut off date and the form is closed?

Your child's school are requested to send reminders out to parents prior to the cut-off date. One working day after the school session visit, you will be able to complete consent and book into a catch-up clinic online. Instructions on how to book an appointment will be emailed to you upon submission of a positive consent form. If you are unable to use the online booking system, please contact your local team on the number provided.

What do I do if I do not want my child to have this vaccination?

To indicate that you do not give consent for this vaccination, please complete the online consent form following the steps in the parent letter and answer 'no' to the consent question.

However, if your child approaches us requesting these vaccinations where you have indicated you do not consent, we will endeavour to have a conversation with you to discuss their options. Legally children under the age of 16 can consent to their own treatment if they demonstrate the competence and understanding to fully appreciate what's involved in their treatment.

What do I do if I have changed my mind after completing an online consent form?

You must phone the Immunisation Service to change your consent in addition to informing your child's school, in writing, prior to the vaccination session date.

Can I use the same school code for both my children?

No, the school code is unique to each individual school name and site. If you have more than one child, but they do not attend the exact same school site, please do not submit the consent form using the same code. You will receive a letter from each child's school containing their unique school code, approximately 4 weeks prior to the vaccination session date.

What does giving consent for SCFT staff to view my child's Digital Health Record mean?

It enables any SCFT Children's Services staff, who provide care for your child, to see information which has been shared out from the GP and other health organisations records, if they use compatible systems. We cannot view other organisations records without consent, except in exceptional circumstances. Access to your child's health record helps our services to make safe clinical decisions on the most appropriate treatment and care. For further information visit: <https://www.sussexcommunity.nhs.uk/contact-us/patient-records.htm>