



HPV vaccination against cervical cancer

To parents/guardians of girls in 7th grade



– Consider your health!

The Icelandic health authorities initiated HPV vaccination as part of the National Childhood Vaccination Programme in Iceland in 2011 and the vaccination is now offered to girls in 7th grade (12 years of age). In general the vaccination takes place in schools but may in some cases be administered at health care centres. Parents/guardians will receive a notification prior to the vaccination. The vaccine being used is Cervarix produced by GlaxoSmithKline (GSK).

HPV is an abbreviation for *Human Papilloma Virus*, which is a very common virus, especially among young people, and is transmitted by sexual contact. It is estimated that about 80% of those sexually active are infected by the virus. The virus has many different types some of which cause infections in the genital area. In most cases the virus will vanish without treatment but in some cases certain types of the virus may linger and cause precancerous changes or cervical cancer later in life.

The HPV vaccine will only prevent an infection and therefore it is important that girls receive the vaccine prior to their first sexual contact. The vaccine targets two of the most common types of HPV that cause cancer and precancerous changes in the cervix. Research has shown that the vaccination is likely to provide about 70% protection against cervical cancer. We suggest you talk to your daughter about the vaccination before it takes place in her school.

Because the vaccine does not give full protection against cervical cancer it is important that girls attend cervical cancer screening when they grow up.

About the vaccination



The vaccine will be administered in three doses over a period of 6 months. In order to obtain optimal protection it is very important that the three doses will be administered within a year. Common side effects are mild with some soreness in the arm along with inflammation and redness that will wear off in several days. More serious side effects are not known or are very rare. Fainting may occur occasionally in connection with the vaccination but is not related to the vaccine.

If you decide not to accept the HPV vaccination for your daughter please contact the school nurse at her school by phone or by e-mail prior to the date of the vaccination.

With regards

Haraldur Briem, Chief Epidemiologist



Facts about the HPV vaccination:

HPV vaccination protects against most precancerous changes in the cervix and lowers the risk of cervical cancer.

HPV or Human Papilloma Virus is very common among young people.

The virus spreads through intimate sexual contact and therefore it is important to receive the vaccine prior to starting sexual life.

To obtain the best protection it is important that all three doses will be administered within one year.

Further information can be found at the following websites: landlaeknir.is, 6h.is, and www.cancerscreening.nhs.uk.

