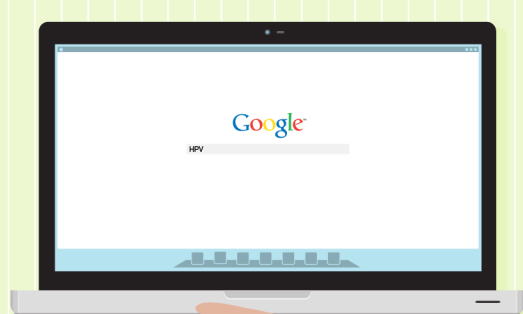


# HPV

[ Human Papillomavirus ]



Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a virus that often has no symptoms but can cause cervical cancer. Chances are, you've been exposed to this virus and didn't know it. Protect yourself by knowing the difference between these myths and facts.

## Myths

Having HPV means you will get cervical cancer.

You can only get HPV as a young woman.

The HPV vaccine can cure HPV.

You must rely on your health care professional for an accurate diagnosis.

## Facts

**Having HPV means you are at greater risk for developing cervical cancer.**

Most women with HPV will clear the virus on their own within 2 years.

**People of any age can get HPV.**

At least 50% of sexually active adults will get HPV at some point by the age of 50.

**The HPV vaccine cannot treat HPV, but it can protect against the strains—HPV 16 and 18—that cause 70% of cervical cancers.**

You still need to get screened, even if you get vaccinated.

## Myths

Regular Pap tests mean you don't need the HPV test.

Having only oral sex will protect you from HPV.

If a condom is used during sex, HPV can't be spread.

Symptoms of HPV appear immediately.

## Facts

**Women over 30 have a better chance of preventing cervical cancer if they get both an HPV and Pap test.**

Getting the tests together is called co-testing.

**HPV can spread during sexual relations of any form.**

Actually, an increase in oral sex may be causing an increase in the number of oral and tonsillar cancer diagnoses.

**Condoms don't provide complete protection against HPV but should still be used.**

The virus is spread through skin-to-skin contact, which also includes the genital area, anus and mouth.

**Most people do not have any symptoms from the types of HPV that can cause cervical cancer.**

If you do experience symptoms, they can take weeks, months or years to show up.