



Understanding the HPV Vaccine

A guide for parents

A vaccine that prevents cancer.

What is HPV?

HPV, the human papillomavirus, is one of the most common viruses in the world. Most people are exposed to it at some point in their lives, often without ever knowing.

Usually the body clears it on its own. But sometimes it stays, and over the years it can quietly lead to cancer.

Which Cancers HPV Can Cause

HPV is linked to several cancers, including:

- Cervical cancer
- Anal cancer
- Penile cancer
- Vaginal cancer
- Vulval cancer
- Some cancers of the mouth and throat

Cervical cancer is the second most common cancer among Namibian women. More than 95% of cases are caused by HPV.

About the Vaccine

The vaccine works by preventing infection, so it is given before exposure. It cannot treat an infection already there.

- **Protects** against the HPV types behind most cervical cancers
- **Recommended** by the World Health Organisation
- **Long-lasting** protection
- **Reduces** the risk of genital warts too
- **Safety and efficacy tested in multiple clinical trials**



Who Should Have It, and When

It works best given early, from age 9, before exposure to the virus.

- **From age 9:** the ideal age, before any exposure
- **Up to age 26:** catch-up for those who missed it
- **Ages 27 to 45:** benefit is more limited, a decision to discuss with a clinician

Girls and boys. Boys can develop HPV-related cancers too, and vaccinating them slows the spread.

Common Questions

Why so young?

Because it prevents an infection that can lead to cancer years later, and works fully only before exposure.

Why boys too?

Boys can develop HPV-related cancers, and vaccinating them also reduces the spread of the virus.

Is it safe?

Yes. Used worldwide for years. Side effects are usually mild and short-lived, such as a sore arm.

Dosing: ages 9 to 14, usually two doses; age 15 and older, usually three. Your NOC clinician will confirm.



The Rare Good News in Oncology

Most of our work in cancer care begins after a diagnosis.

With the HPV vaccine, we get to act before it begins.

Will my medical aid cover the HPV vaccine?

Your patient care coordinator can assist with the authorisation request.

Medical aid	Who is covered	Cover	Prior approval
NHP	Females. No age limit.	80% of the NMPL Acute Benefit, up to N\$961 per script. Up to 3 doses.	Coordinator can assist
NAMMED	Males and females, 10 to 30. Requires a Letter of Motivation.	100%, from the Preventative Benefit.	Required before vaccination
RMA / Gemhealth / NAPOTEL	Females, 9 to 30.	100%, Preventative Benefit. Three fills, once in a lifetime.	Required before vaccination
NMC	Females, 9 to 30.	100%, Medicines and Injections Benefit (SEP + 40%).	Required before vaccination
PSEMAS	Females, 9 to 30.	100%, Medicines and Injections Benefit (SEP + 40%).	Required before vaccination

Scheme rules and amounts change. Please confirm current cover with your medical aid or our patient care coordinator before vaccination.



Protect Your Child

Ask us about the HPV vaccine.

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