



Human Papillomavirus (HPV)

Dear Parent or Guardian:

As a parent, there is nothing more important than safeguarding your child's health. The Washington State Legislature requires us to make information available to you about human papillomavirus (HPV) and how to prevent it. Know the facts about HPV and the vaccine available to protect your child.

What is HPV?

HPV is a common virus. Most people exposed to HPV will never develop health issues. But for others, HPV causes major health problems, including cervical, anal, vulvar, mouth, and throat cancer. Most infected people have no symptoms and may spread the virus without knowing it. HPV spreads mainly through sexual contact.

How can I protect my child from HPV?

Make sure your child gets the HPV vaccine. The vaccine is highly effective. The best time to get it is before sexual activity ever starts. The HPV vaccine can prevent infection from some of the most common and serious types of HPV that cause cancer and genital warts. The vaccine does not get rid of existing HPV infections.

Who should get the vaccine and when should they get it?

Three doses of HPV vaccine are recommended for all boys and girls starting at ages 11 to 12. It is recommended for females up to age 26 and for males up to age 21. In addition to HPV vaccine, your 11 to 12 year-old should receive Tdap and meningococcal vaccines.

Where can I find the HPV vaccine?

Ask your doctor, nurse, or local health department to find out more about HPV vaccine and where you can get it. Washington provides all recommended vaccines at no cost for kids through age 18, available from providers across the state. Providers may charge an office visit fee and an administration fee to give the vaccine. People who can't afford the administration fee can ask to have it waived.

For more information on HPV, the vaccine, and cervical cancer:

- Washington State Department of Health
www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/348-187_HumanPapillomavirusVaccineFactsheet.pdf.
- Centers for Disease Control & Prevention
www.cdc.gov/std/hpv/
- American Cancer Society
www.cancer.org

Sincerely,

Ridgefield School District
Health Services Department

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Office: 360-619-1320
Fax: 360-619-1395 | <input type="checkbox"/> South Ridge Elementary
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Fax: 360-619-1559 | <input type="checkbox"/> Union Ridge Elementary
Office: 360-750-7608
Fax: 360-750-7659 | <input type="checkbox"/> View Ridge Middle School
Office: 360-619-1407
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