

HPV Vaccine Completion at Planned Parenthood

The Vaccine:

- The HPV vaccine protects against **cancers and genital warts** caused by human papillomavirus (HPV) infection, the most common sexually transmitted infection.
- **Three HPV vaccines** have been approved by the US Food and Drug Administration. Since May 2017, only one vaccine (Gardasil® 9) is available for use in the United States. Research shows that the vaccine is safe.
- The HPV vaccine is recommended for routine administration at **11 or 12 years** of age but is **approved for males and females ages 9-45**; in October 2018, the approval age was extended from 26 to 45 years of age, offering increased opportunity for vaccination among adults.
- Currently, people aged 9-14 should be vaccinated with a **two-dose series**, separated by 6-12 months. People aged 15 and older should be vaccinated with a **three-dose series**, with the second dose 1-2 months after the first dose and the third dose 6 months after the first dose.
- **At the time of this study**, recommendations were for a three-dose series within 6 months, regardless of age.

The Study:

In the last decade, studies have found **low rates of HPV vaccination**. In a study published in the *American Journal of Public Health*, Planned Parenthood researchers explored completion of the 3-shot HPV vaccination series using electronic health record data from patients visiting Planned Parenthood health centers in 11 US states. This study examined HPV vaccine completion among both female and male adolescents and young adults. Similar to prior studies of safety net providers, we found that completion rates were low. Family planning providers like Planned Parenthood offer opportunities to increase vaccination for individuals who may not have regular access to primary care. For more on this study and Planned Parenthood research, go to <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/about-us/newsroom/research-planned-parenthood>.

Who Participated:

In this study, the majority of patients who received the HPV vaccine at Planned Parenthood health centers in 2011-2013 were:

- female (**85%**)
- 22-26 years old (**72%**; patient ages ranged from 11-26 years)
- covered by public insurance (**77%**)
- living at or below the federal poverty level (**52%**)

Two in five participants identified as White (**38%**); one in three as Hispanic (**33%**); and one in ten as Asian or Pacific Islander (**11%**).

The Results:

- One in three patients completed all three shots (**33%**).
- Among those who completed the vaccine, **15%** did so within 6 months (as recommended at the time) and **89%** within a year.
- Completion rates differed by age, sex, race/ethnicity, and insurance type:
 - Completion was **more likely** among female patients (compared to male patients) and Asian or Pacific Islander patients (compared to White patients).
 - Completion was **less likely** among patients who received the first dose when they were younger than 22 years (compared to 22-26 year olds), Black patients (compared to White patients), and publicly insured patients (compared to privately insured patients).



Findings from this research suggest that there is a clear opportunity to increase both initiation and completion of the HPV vaccine; higher vaccination can improve health outcomes and address disparities in cervical cancer.