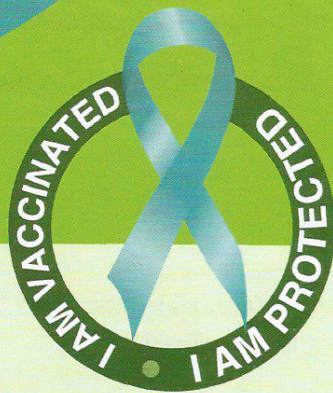


FACT SHEET



Human Papillomavirus (HPV):

- is a very common infectious agent
- has no visible signs and symptoms,
- infections will mostly go away without causing illness
- causes most cases of cervical cancer
- is most likely to infect adolescent girls and young women at sexual debut
- is transmitted during sexual activity

STATISTICS

The incidence of cervical cancer in Zimbabwe is reported to be **34.5 per 100 000 women** as compared to the **global average of 15.1¹**

Annually there are some **2270 new cases** reported with **1451 associated deaths²** in Zimbabwe

99% of cervical cancers are associated with HPV infection

About **7 in every 10 women** will have HPV at some point in their lifetime

Two strains of HPV (HPV-16 and HPV-18) are found to cause over **70% of the cervical cancer cases³**

The cancer causing strains, HPV-16 and HPV-18 are **vaccine-preventable**.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has recommended **vaccinating girls before they are sexually active** (between 9 to 14 years⁴) to protect them from getting HPV infection

HPV vaccine has been **successfully piloted in Zimbabwe** as from September 2014 and it was well tolerated among the 9-13 year old girls

¹ Bruni L, Barrionuevo-Rosas L, Albero G, Serrano B, Mena M, Gómez D, Muñoz J, Bosch FX, de Sanjosé S. ICO Information Centre on HPV and Cancer (HPV Information Centre). Human Papillomavirus and Related Diseases in Zimbabwe. Summary Report 7 October 2016

² ibid

³ <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs380/en/>

⁴ Human Papillomavirus vaccines: WHO position paper, May 2017

Cervical cancer:

- is one of the most common cancers affecting women in Zimbabwe
- affects the lower part of the womb (Cervix)
- only affects women
- needs a special screening test to detect it
- if not detected at early stage becomes difficult to treat and often results in death

HPV vaccine:

- prevents infection from HPV strains which cause most of the cervical cancers
- is most effective in young girls who are not yet sexually active and therefore have not yet come into contact with the HPV infection
- is safe and effective
- requires 2 doses 6 to 15 months apart
- presents an opportunity for Zimbabwe to make long term health benefits such as reduction of cost of screening, diagnosing and treatment of cervical cancer.

HPV vaccine cannot:

- treat or cure HPV infection
- treat or cure cervical cancer
- prevent or treat Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection
- prevent or end pregnancy
- cause infertility

For more information visit your nearest health facility

**Cervical Cancer Prevention is everyone's responsibility.
Get girls vaccinated against HPV!!!**



ZIMBABWE

