

Cancer won't wait

Help Prevent HPV and Cervical Cancer Now

THE Y FACTOR: LET US NOT FORGET OUR BOYS/MEN

DR. CHRISTINE PALMAY, MD, CFPC / DR. VIVIEN BROWN MDCM, CCFP, FCFP, NCMP

IT IS ESSENTIAL TO REMIND OURSELVES, OUR PATIENTS, AND OUR COLLEAGUES, THAT BOTH MEN AND WOMEN REMAIN AT RISK FOR HPV INFECTION.

In men, HPV infections are responsible for the majority of anal, penile, oropharyngeal, and oral cavity cancers. Despite a robust national publicly funded immunization program for both male and female Canadian students, we still find that many of our male patients are still unaware of the risk of HPV, and/or have not been counselled about HPV vaccination. Confusion, media driven myths, and a stigmatization of “shame” relating to HPV further increases the lack of evidence-based care. This gap in knowledge results in missed vaccine opportunities, and most importantly puts our male patients at ongoing risk of HPV infections and HPV related cancers*.

National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) recommends HPV vaccination in females and males between the ages of 9 to less than 27 years of age. NACI also recommends that these vaccines be administered to individuals 27 years of age and older at ongoing risk of exposure to HPV. As physicians, we are also responsible to take guidelines into consideration, but also address case specific situations when a patient may have an ongoing, or future risk of HPV infection†.

- 1 MALE PATIENTS** – proactively engage in a discussion with all of your male patients regarding their susceptibility to HPV. This includes visits relating to STI testing, periodic health exams, and any discussion related to preventative health. Consider widowed or divorced patients who may be embarking on new relationships. Target patients who may have been too old to receive HPV vaccination when in school – Most provinces introduced male programs by 2017. Quite frankly, have the discussion at any and every opportunity.
- 2 RISK OF TRANSMISSION** – with our male patients, let’s remember this is a sexually transmitted infection, easily transmitted through intimate touching even without intercourse. In being vaccinated, they can lower the risk of spreading infection to their partner, male or female. So not only can they lower their own risk of certain HPV-related cancers and diseases, they may help reduce the risk of HPV transmission to the person they care about.
- 3 MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN** – this patient subgroup has a disproportionately high burden of HPV infection, in particular the highly oncogenic strains (HPV types 16 and 18). It is essential that we counsel these men regarding their risks, properly conduct oropharyngeal and anal/genital exams, and consistently encourage them to consider HPV vaccination.
- 4 HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS** – given the closure of school-based immunization programs and public health vaccination clinics, we recommend proactively recalling eligible students for vaccination catch-up, including HPV vaccination. This process also provides us an opportunity to educate parents (both fathers and mothers) about the burden of HPV, and potential vaccination opportunities for all family members, fathers/brothers/uncles included!

It is our personal opinion, that the irony is that sexual freedom and “vigour” have historically been imbalanced in favour of males. Perhaps this deeply flawed notion of nearly unbreakable masculinity precludes more sensitive discussions about STI risks, including HPV. As the world shifts and we reassess previous misconceptions, our role as Canadian HCP’s provides us with a gift to address gaps in care. Even if society embarks on a trajectory of justice and inclusion, cancer won’t wait for the world to fully change. As such, we won’t wait to break myths. We must include our males in this journey towards HPV related cancer elimination.

Our role as Canadian HCP’s provides us with an opportunity to address gaps in care. We must include our males in this journey towards the elimination of certain HPV-related cancers.

*HPV vaccines are not indicated for the prevention of penile or oropharyngeal/oral cavity cancers.
†Not everyone may be fully protected by HPV vaccination.

WORDS OF WISDOM

“The best way out is always through.”

– Robert Frost

Across the Globe

In the last few years, several countries have also expanded, or will soon expand, vaccination to boys - namely Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Republic of Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Unfortunately, almost all countries have also experienced a disruption to their routine immunizations programs due to COVID.

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PREVENTING HPV INFECTIONS IN ALL AT RISK PEOPLE: *a challenge!*

Authored by Dominique Tessier, MD, CCFP, FCFP, FISTM
CLINIQUE DU QUARTIER LATIN AND CLINIQUES DU GROUPE SANTÉ VOYAGE

THE MISSION OF THE CLINIQUE DU QUARTIER LATIN IS TO PROVIDE ACCESSIBLE CARE IN DOWNTOWN MONTREAL, to a clientele that is often vulnerable and marginalized, including people infected with HIV. I am also a doctor at the Groupe de Santé Voyage, providing immunizations to adults and travelers. I am committed to preventing communicable diseases and reducing their impact on infected people. Vaccination against HPV makes perfect sense with my clientele, which mainly consists of men, many of whom are immunosuppressed. In fact, the prevalence of genital HPV infection is higher in men than in women in all age groups. HPV infection is responsible for more than 1,000 cases of oropharyngeal cancer, 150 cases of anal cancer, and 150 cases of penile cancer in men annually.* Not to mention more than 25,000 cases of genital warts. There is no effective screening program in men.

DURING A PANDEMIC, it is important to seize every opportunity in person to maximize the impact of these visits and help limit the risks for vulnerable people. Updating immunizations is a priority. The advent of the COVID-19 vaccines and the uncertainty surrounding how long it will take to complete the vaccination series are forcing me to strongly recommend HPV vaccination today, without any delay. Certain HPV infections in men can, and should be prevented.

*HPV vaccines are not indicated for the prevention of penile or oropharyngeal/oral cavity cancers.



*Implement
a recall system*

for patients eligible
for HPV vaccination

*Counsel on
vaccination*

at every virtual consult

*Send an
electronic mailer*

to patients about the benefits of HPV
vaccination with a request to call
the clinic for an appointment

Think about

sending the Rx directly
to the patient's pharmacy
offering vaccination
services

Hot off the press!

Check recommendations for COVID-19 Vaccine
co-administration and black-out periods for
administration of other vaccines pre and post
receiving a COVID-19 Vaccine dose



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Resource of the Month



Dr. Nancy Durand Talks About HPV

[WATCH NOW](#)

Back in Time

Ancient versions of condoms were made with linen and animal intestines. Goodyear patented his method of shaping and strengthening rubber in 1844, and the first modern rubber condom was produced a decade later.

Did you Know?

In August 2020, Health Canada extended the indication for HPV 9 to include men between the ages of 27 to 45.

[CLICK HERE TO JOIN THE HUNDREDS OF HCPS'S WHO HAVE ALREADY JOINED THE CANCER WON'T WAIT INITIATIVE. EVERY VOICE COUNTS!](#)

Want to Learn More?

JOIN US FOR A WEBINAR

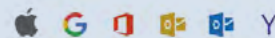
PRESENTER: Dr. Christine Palmay, MD,CFPC

MODERATOR: Dr. Vivien Brown, MDCM, CCFP, FCFP, NCMP

THE Y FACTOR: THE IMPORTANCE OF HPV AWARENESS IN MEN

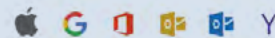
Tuesday Mar 30th 730-830pm EST
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Wednesday Mar 31st 1230-130pm EST
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