



## Head and Neck Cancer

Oropharyngeal cancers, also called head and neck cancers, are tumors that occur in the mouth, throat, tonsils and tongue.

These cancers are now the most common HPV associated cancers, even more common than cervical cancer. They are much more common in men than in women and are typically diagnosed years after the initial HPV infection. Head and neck cancers are treatable, but, like other cancers, they can lead to serious damage.

## What can you do?

### Get vaccinated!

Most clinics, school based health centers, sexual health centers and local health departments carry the HPV vaccine. Start your child's HPV vaccination series on time!

### Talk to your provider about the HPV vaccine!

Talk to your medical provider or call the Oregon Immunization Program at 971-673-0300.

### Practice safe oral sex!

Use dental dams and condoms to better protect yourself.

### Get examined for head and neck cancer!

If you have any mouth sores, difficulty swallowing or hoarseness, make an appointment to see your medical or dental provider.

### Learn more here:

- Oregon Health Authority  
<http://tinyurl.com/OHA-HPVinfo>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)  
<http://tinyurl.com/CDC-HPVinfo>

You can get this document in other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer. Contact the Immunization Program at 971-673-0300. We accept all relay calls or you can dial 711.

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# ORAL HPV AND CANCER

PROTECT YOUR FAMILY



Oregon  
**Health**  
Authority  
PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION  
Immunization Program

## What is oral HPV?

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a common infection. There are over 40 different types of HPV, including some that can lead to cancer.

Oral HPV is an HPV infection in the mouth or throat. Most people will never know they are infected because there are usually no symptoms. Even with no symptoms, HPV can still be spread from person to person and may lead to head and neck cancers in the future.

You can protect yourself and your loved ones by knowing how oral HPV spreads and making sure your children are vaccinated at the right age.

## How does oral HPV spread?

Studies show that oral HPV spreads mainly through oral sex. There are other ways to spread the disease, though, and more research is needed to fully understand them. The risk of oral HPV infection increases with lack of vaccination, multiple sexual partners and lack of sexual protection.

HPV is the most widespread sexually transmitted infection in the United States. Studies in the U.S. show that about 7% of people have oral HPV, but infection may be more common because screening for HPV is uncommon. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, oral HPV is about three times more common in men than in women.



## HPV vaccination can help!

Vaccination is the first step in protecting against HPV and associated cancers and must be done between ages 9 and 26. The HPV vaccine prevents HPV types 16 and 18, the types most likely to cause head and neck cancers.

The HPV vaccination is safe and very effective.

Age at FIRST dose	Vaccine dose 1	Vaccine dose 2	Vaccine dose 3
9-14 Years	Now	6-12 Months	Not Needed*
15-26 Years	Now	1-2 months after dose 1	6 months after dose 1

*\*If series is initiated before age 15 and there is at least 5 months between doses, then only two doses are needed.*