

## Prevent the Spread of HPV

Latex condoms, when used consistently and correctly, are effective at reducing the risk of transmission of sexually transmitted infections. This is only if the condom covers the affected area or site of potential exposure.

## HPV vaccines

The HPV vaccine (Gardasil) works by preventing four common HPV types - two that cause genital warts and two that cause some cancers. It protects against new HPV infections; it does not cure existing HPV infections or disease. It is most effective when given before first sexual contact.

Some men may benefit more from this vaccine than others.

- Males who have not yet had sex will benefit most from the vaccine, since they are unlikely to have been infected with HPV.
- Young men who have sex with men might benefit more from this vaccine, especially if they have had few or no partners prior to vaccination, since they are more likely to develop HPV-related diseases than other men.

The HPV vaccine is very safe and effective, with no serious side effects. The most common side effect is soreness in the arm. Males previously infected with HPV will get less benefit from the vaccination.

Available data show that the vaccine can protect men against genital warts. It is possible that this vaccine also protects men from HPV-related cancers, like anal and penile cancers. Studies are being completed to evaluate this.

## Resources

- National HPV Resource Center  
[www.ashastd.org/hpv/hpv\\_overview.cfm](http://www.ashastd.org/hpv/hpv_overview.cfm)
- ASHA's HPV Discussion and Support Forum  
[www.ashastd.org/phpbb/index.php](http://www.ashastd.org/phpbb/index.php)

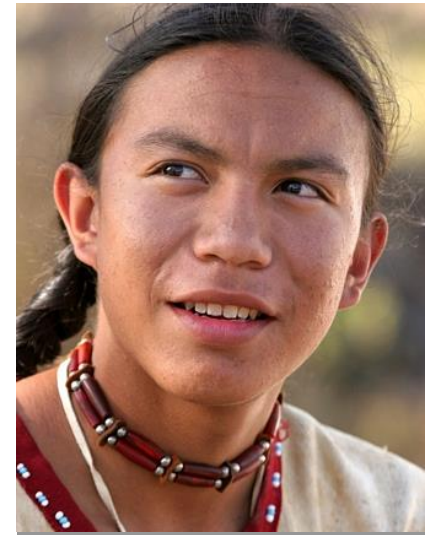
## Resources

- National Cancer Institute. General Information about Penile Cancer:  
<http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/pdq/threatment/penile/patient>
- National Cancer Institute. General Information about Anal Cancer:  
<http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/pdq/threatment/anal/patient>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Human papillomavirus.  
<http://www.cdc.gov/hpv/>



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# HPV

## A Guide for Men



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## What is HPV?

Human papillomavirus, better known as HPV, is a virus in the body that is known to cause genital warts and cervical cancer. Some types of HPV cause common warts (like those found on hands). Others types infect genital and anal skin, and are sexually transmitted. HPV infections are usually not harmful and typically do not result in symptoms you can see. Most men and women never know they have HPV.

## How do you get HPV?

HPV is spread by skin-to-skin contact. This can occur during vaginal and anal sex and when private areas touch. HPV may also be transmitted through oral sex, although oral HPV infections are less common. There do not need to be any signs or symptoms present for it to be spread.

## Is HPV dangerous?

It can be. It is important to get routinely screened to help prevent the spread of HPV.

## How common is HPV?

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is one of the most common sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Approximately 20 million Americans are currently infected and another 6 million will become newly infected each year.

## What can HPV cause in men?

Some types of HPV can cause genital warts, which often appear as fleshy, painless, cauliflower-shaped skin growths. Warts are often small and hard to see and can have different appearances: they might be smooth or rough, or large or small. There might be just one wart, or several. The HPV types that cause warts are known as “low risk” because they are almost never found with genital or anal cancers.

Other types of HPV, called “high risk” types, can cause small cell changes of the penis and anus that the naked eye can't see. These changes aren't found very often, though and penile and anal cancers are very rare.

## How does a man know if he has HPV?

Most people infected with HPV don't have symptoms. But if they do, the symptoms may be so mild that they may not know they are infected. The symptoms may include pain, itching, and bleeding, or you may develop visible genital warts.

To examine men, health care providers take a close look and evaluate for signs of the HPV. They can check for any abnormalities on the penis, scrotum, or around the anus.

When someone has HPV or a related condition (like warts or cell changes), their partners are not generally urged to go for evaluation unless they have symptoms that need to be checked. This is because there is no treatment for HPV if there are no symptoms.

Currently HPV test are not approved for use with men outside of medical research studies. Experts are looking at ways to better screen men, and the current lack of testing options for males can be very frustrating.

## How long can you have HPV before it gets detected?

The virus can remain hidden and undetected for weeks, months, or even years. It's not unusual for HPV to be found in long-term, faithful relationships.

## HPV in relationships

When one person in a relationship has HPV, it's likely their partner shares the virus. Couples that share HPV are not thought to be at great risk for reinfecting one another.

## What are health problems caused by HPV?

Most men who get HPV never develop any symptoms or health problems. However, some types of HPV can cause genital warts. Other types can cause penile, anal, or head and neck cancers. The types of HPV that can cause genital warts are not the same types that can cause cancer.



## Signs and symptoms of anal cancer:

- Sometimes there are no signs or symptoms.
- Anal bleeding, pain, itching, or discharge.
- Swollen lymph nodes in the anal or groin area.
- Changes in bowel habits or the shape of your stool.

## Signs of penile cancer:

- There may be no signs or symptoms until the cancer is quite advanced
- First signs: changes in color, skin thickening, or a build-up of tissue on the penis.
- Later signs: a growth or sore on the penis. It is usually painless, but in some cases, the sore may be painful and bleed.