

## Updates to the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Immunization Program Question and Answer Document August 2017

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### 1. What is new for the HPV Immunization Program?

As of September 1, 2017, grade 6 boys will be eligible to receive HPV9 vaccine as part of the routine school-based program. Additionally, individuals 9-26 years of age who identify as transgender will also be eligible for HPV vaccine.

### 2. Which vaccine will be used for the HPV program in BC?

As of 2017, all individuals eligible for the publicly-funded HPV program in BC will receive the 9-valent HPV vaccine (HPV9) which provides protection against 9 types of HPV: 6, 11, 16, 18, 31, 33, 45, 52, and 58. The HPV9 vaccine (Gardasil®9, Merck Canada Inc.) was authorized for use in Canada in February 2015.

### 3. What level of protection does the HPV9 vaccine offer?

HPV9 vaccine protects against HPV types 16 and 18, which cause about 70% of cervical cancers and the majority of other HPV-associated cancers in both women and men, and HPV types 6 and 11 that cause about 90% of anogenital warts. HPV9 also protects against five additional cancer causing types (HPV 31, 33, 45, 52, 58) which account for about 15% of cervical cancers and about 11% of anal cancers in females and 4% in males.<sup>1</sup>

#### 4. What is the immunization schedule for the HPV9 vaccine?

The recommended immunization schedule for HPV9 vaccine is as follows:

- Immunocompetent individuals 9-14 years of age (inclusive), including grade 6 students, should receive 2 doses given as 0.5 mL IM, separated by at least 6 months.
- Individuals 15 years of age and older and those who are immunocompromised (including those with HIV infection) should receive 3 doses given as 0.5 mL IM at 0, 2 and 6 months.

For more information, see the [BC Immunization Manual, Part 4 – Biological Products, Human Papillomavirus Vaccine \(Nonavalent\)](#).

#### 5. Are individuals who have previously received HPV2 or HPV4 vaccine eligible to receive the HPV9 vaccine?

This depends upon the following factors:

- How many doses of HPV2 or HPV4 vaccine they have received
- Whether they are HIV positive

##### **Those who are HIV positive:**

HIV positive men and women who are incompletely immunized and have started an HPV vaccine series with either HPV2 or HPV4 are eligible to restart the series using HPV9. HIV positive men and women who received a complete series of HPV2 or HPV4 are considered to be up-to-date.

##### **Grade 6 students and other eligible individuals who are incompletely immunized:**

Grade 6 students, both male and female, and other eligible individuals who are incompletely immunized and have started an HPV series with either HPV2 or HPV4 should have their series completed with the HPV9 vaccine. Such individuals should be informed that a complete series of HPV9 is recommended to ensure protection against the five additional HPV types in the vaccine; however, additional doses of HPV9 beyond a complete HPV series are not part of the publicly-funded program and would need to be purchased from a pharmacy or travel clinic.

##### **Grade 6 students and other eligible individuals who have completed an HPV2 or HPV4 vaccine series:**

Grade 6 students, both male and female, and other eligible individuals who have completed an HPV2 or HPV4 vaccine series are considered up-to-date and are not eligible for publicly-funded HPV9 vaccine.

**6. What is the recommended schedule for an individual who has initiated an HPV series with HPV2 or HPV4, completed the series with HPV9 and subsequently wishes to complete a full series of HPV9 vaccine?**

Individuals who have initiated an HPV series with HPV2 or HPV4 vaccine and complete with HPV9 may choose to purchase additional doses of HPV9 in order to ensure protection against the additional HPV strains. The HPV9 doses provided to complete the initial HPV series should be counted as the initial doses of the HPV9 series and the series should be completed using the recommended intervals as indicated in the age-appropriate HPV9 schedule. For example:

**a) Immunocompetent individuals 9-14 years of age**

- Require a total of two doses of HPV9 vaccine given 6 months apart.

HPV4      6 months      HPV9      6 months      *HPV9*  
          →                   →

**b) Immunocompetent individuals 15 years of age and older and those with immunocompromising conditions**

- Require a total of 3 doses of HPV9 vaccine given at 0-2-6 months

HPV4      2 months      HPV4      4 months      HPV9      2 months      *HPV9*      4 months      *HPV9*  
          →                   →                   →                   →

**7. What is the recommended interval for an individual who has completed an HPV vaccine series with HPV2 or HPV4 and wishes to receive an HPV9 vaccine series?**

Individuals who have completed an HPV2 or HPV4 series may choose to purchase an HPV9 vaccine series in order to ensure protection against the additional HPV strains. For such individuals, a minimum interval of 6 months is recommended between completion of an HPV2 or HPV4 series and initiation of an HPV9 series.

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**REFERENCES:**

- <sup>1</sup> Saraiya M, Unger ER, Thompson TD, et al. US Assessment of HPV Types in Cancers: Implications for Current and 9-Valent HPV Vaccines. J Natl Cancer Instit. 2015; 107(6):djv086.