



October 28, 2024

Dear Members of Congress:

HealthyWomen and the members of its HPV Coalition are writing to urge you to support efforts toward increasing utilization of the HPV vaccine and cervical screening to prevent HPV-related cancers. The HPV Coalition consists of over fifty health and advocacy stakeholder organizations that work together to increase HPV vaccination to prevent HPV cancers, ensure essential cervical cancer screening, and highlight the need for early treatment of HPV cancers.

Time is of the essence to realize the promise of the tools available to us to prevent cancers and ultimately eliminate them. If you have not already, **please consider cosponsoring the PREVENT HPV Cancers Act, H.R. 3633**, which was reintroduced in the House on May 24, 2023, and **urge leadership to pass in the current Congress**. The bill will help raise awareness about HPV and HPV-related cancers through a national campaign to educate providers, parents, and the public about life-saving HPV vaccination. It would also provide funding for a federal initiative to provide access to timely cervical cancer screening and diagnostic services for uninsured and underserved individuals.

Cancers caused by human papillomavirus (HPV) are a significant public health problem in the United States, **yet we have the power to eliminate HPV cancers**, such as cervical cancer, through HPV vaccination, cervical screening, and cervical cancer follow-up care and treatment. Additionally, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), **on-time HPV vaccination has the potential to prevent 90 percent of HPV-associated cancers**.¹

HPV vaccination protects against the types of HPV that cause 99% of cervical and other HPV-associated cancers, such as throat, head, anal, penile, vaginal, and vulvar cancer. HPV causes over 47,000 new cases of cancer each year, including over 26,000 cases among women and 21,000 among men.² Virtually all cervical cancers are caused by high-risk types of HPV, and cervical cancer is the fourth most common cancer in women worldwide.³ Additionally, oropharyngeal cancers (cancers of the back of the throat, including the base of the tongue and tonsils) have surpassed cervical cancer as the most common type of HPV cancer in the United States. About 83% of HPV-associated oropharyngeal cancers are diagnosed among men.

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [Human Papillomavirus \(HPV\) Vaccination: What Everyone Should Know](#)

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [Cancers Associated with Human Papillomavirus](#)

³Pimple S, Mishra G. Cancer cervix: Epidemiology and disease burden. *Cytojournal*. 2022;19:21. Published 2022 Mar 29. doi:10.25259/CMAS_03_02_2021

Yet, despite the tremendous positive results already generated by HPV vaccination and what it could do moving forward, vaccination rates are not where they could or should be in the U.S. The most recent estimates show that only about 63 percent of teens were fully vaccinated in 2022.⁴ One study showed even lower rates and provided evidence that, during the pandemic, the rates sunk even further.⁵ However, there is great potential to eliminate HPV-associated cancers in the U.S. A Public Health Scotland study demonstrated the remarkable effectiveness of the HPV vaccine, it found no cervical cancers in women born between 1988 and 1996 who were fully vaccinated before the age of 14, and no cervical cancers detected to date among fully immunized women since program inception in 2008.⁶ Immunizations were offered as a part of free, routine, school-based programs with informed consent of parents and caregivers.⁷

Another key action to prevent HPV-related cancers, specifically cervical cancer, is through screening to aid in early detection and timely follow-up care and treatment. Over half of all cervical cancer cases in the United States occur in individuals who are infrequently screened or have never been screened, often due to barriers such as socioeconomic disparities, geographic inaccessibility, and cultural barriers. We are encouraged by, and urge your support of, the National Cancer Institute's (NCI) Cervical Cancer 'Last Mile' Initiative, a public-private partnership bringing together federal agencies, industry partners, and professional societies to contribute evidence about the accuracy and clinical effectiveness of self-collection-based HPV testing as an alternative approach to cervical cancer screening.⁸

Congress is and can serve as a key partner in reversing these trends by promoting awareness about HPV and HPV-related diseases. You can help to reach more people with the message that HPV infections and the associated cancer risks are wholly **preventable** with a safe, effective, and durable vaccination against HPV. In summary, we urge you to take part in the critical effort to increase on-time HPV vaccinations across the country, which will prevent 90% of HPV cancers:

- Cosponsor the PREVENT HPV Cancers Act - H.R. 3633
- Urge Congressional leadership to pass H.R. 3633
- Normalize HPV vaccination as cancer prevention

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
HealthyWomen

⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [Vaccination Coverage Among Adolescents Aged 13–17 Years — National Immunization Survey–Teen, United States, 2022](#)

⁵ Bower M, Kothari U, Akerman M, Krilov LR, Fiorito TM. Impact of COVID-19 on HPV Vaccination Rates in New York City and Long Island. *Pediatr Infect Dis J*. 2024 Jan 1;43(1):84-87.

⁶ Tim J Palmer, Kimberley Kavanagh, Kate Cuschieri, Ross Cameron, Catriona Graham, Allan Wilson, Kirsty Roy, Invasive cervical cancer incidence following bivalent human papillomavirus vaccination: a population-based observational study of age at immunization, dose, and deprivation, *JNCI: Journal of the National Cancer Institute*, 2024.

⁷ <https://publichealthscotland.scot/news/2024/january/no-cervical-cancer-cases-detected-in-vaccinated-women-following-hpv-immunisation>

⁸ National Cancer Institute Division of Cancer Prevention: [NCI Cervical Cancer 'Last Mile' Initiative](#)

Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy (AMCP)
Alliance for a Healthier Generation
Alliance for Immunization in Michigan
Alliance for Women's Health and Prevention
American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP)
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American Medical Women's Association (AMWA)
ASHA
Black Women's Health Imperative
Byrd Cancer Education and Advocacy Foundation
CancerCare
Cervivor
Friends of Cancer Research
Global Initiative Against HPV and Cervical Cancer
Hager Sharp
Head & Neck Cancer Alliance
Healthy Men Inc.
HPV Cancers Alliance
HPVANDME
Immunize Arkansas
Immunize Colorado
Indiana Immunization Coalition
ITAVFoundation
Journi For Two
Kelsey Seybold
Kentucky Rural Health Association – Immunize Kentucky Coalition
Louisiana Families for Vaccines
Men's Health Network
Miami Cancer Institute
Moffitt Cancer Center
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners/National League for Nursing
National Caucus and Center on Black Aging
National Consumers League
National Grange
National Women's Health Network
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health (NPWH)
Nurses Who Vaccinate
Oncology Nursing Society
Prevent Cancer Foundation
Society for Women's Health Research
St. Jude Children's Research Hospital
STChealth
Team Maureen
Tennessee Families for Vaccines
The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
The Anal Cancer Foundation

The Balm In Gilead, Inc.
TOUCH The Black Breast Cancer Alliance
Unity Consortium
Vaccinate Your Family
VAX 2 STOP CANCER
Voices for Vaccines