



HUMAN PAPILLOMAVIRUS FACT SHEET

WHAT IS HUMAN PAPILLOMAVIRUS (HPV)?

HPV is a group of more than 150 related viruses. Some types of HPV can cause warts and some can lead to cancer.

HOW DO YOU GET HPV?

HPV is transmitted through intimate skin-to-skin contact. You can get HPV by having vaginal, anal, or oral sex with someone who has the virus. HPV can be passed even when an infected person has no signs or symptoms.

SYMPTOMS

You can develop symptoms years after being infected, making it hard to know when you first became infected. In most cases, HPV goes away on its own and does not cause any health problems. But when HPV does not go away, it can cause health problems like genital warts and cancer.

Genital warts usually appear as a small bump or groups of bumps in the genital area. They can be small or large, raised or flat, or shaped like a cauliflower.

HPV cancers include cancer of the cervix, vulva, vagina, penis, or anus. HPV infection can also cause cancer in the back of the throat, including the base of the tongue and tonsils.

TREATMENT

There is no treatment for the virus itself. However, there are treatments for the health problems that HPV can cause. Talk to your healthcare provider regarding treatment options.

PREVENTION

GET VACCINATED! The HPV vaccine helps protect against certain types of HPV that can lead to cancer or genital warts. The HPV vaccine is recommended for men and women through age 26, and certain at-risk individuals ages 27-45. Talk to your healthcare provider to determine if you need the vaccine.

DPHD EFFORTS

The Delaware Public Health District (DPHD) offers the HPV vaccine. Please call (740) 203-2040 to schedule an appointment.