



# Snoqualmie Valley

## *Public Schools*

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8001 Silva Ave SE, P.O. Box 400, Snoqualmie, WA 98065 | Phone: 425-831-8000 | Fax: 425-831-8040 | [www.svsd410.org](http://www.svsd410.org)

Dear Parent or Guardian:

As of July 2005, schools in Washington are required to provide information on meningococcal disease to parents or guardians of all students entering Grades 6-12.

Meningococcal disease is a serious infection of the brain (meningitis) and blood caused by a type of bacteria. Fortunately, this life-threatening infection is rare -- only about 75 people are infected each year in Washington. Adolescents and young adults are more likely to get meningococcal disease, especially those living in group settings, like college dorms.

A vaccine is available that can protect your child against the most common types of bacteria that cause meningococcal disease. One dose of meningococcal vaccine is recommended for all adolescents ages 11-12 years as part of their pre-teen health check-up. The vaccine is also recommended for all adolescents ages 13 through 18 who have not previously been vaccinated. College freshmen living in dorms are at increased risk for meningococcal disease and should get vaccinated before starting college if they didn't get the vaccine at a younger age. The meningococcal vaccine is not required for school or college attendance.

**Here are some other ways to prevent the spread of meningococcal disease:**

- Practice good hygiene (regular hand washing, covering coughs and sneezes, etc.)
- Do not share items such as eating utensils, glasses, cups, water bottles, drinks, lip gloss or toothbrushes, because they may spread meningococcal disease and other bacteria and viruses.

We encourage you to learn more about meningococcal disease and how to prevent it. More information on meningococcal disease, the vaccine, and other recommended immunizations is available on the following web sites:

**Washington State Department of Health Immunization Program**

Meningococcal information:

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/Immunization/Diseases/MeningitisMeningococcalDisease.aspx>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

Meningococcal vaccine information:

[www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/downloads/vis-mening.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/downloads/vis-mening.pdf)

Disease information:

<http://www.cdc.gov/meningococcal/about/index.html>



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Dear Parent or Guardian:

The Washington State Legislature requires us to make information available to you about human papillomavirus (HPV) and how to prevent it.

## **Human papillomavirus (HPV) Disease**

### **What is HPV?**

HPV is a common virus that spreads primarily through sexual contact. Up to 75 percent of HPV infections occur among people 15 thru 24 years old. HPV causes most known cervical cancers, anal cancers, and genital warts. The types of HPV that can cause genital warts are not the same as the types that cause cancer. Some types of HPV can cause penile, anal, or head and neck cancers.

### **What are the symptoms of HPV?**

Most of the time infected individuals have no symptoms and can spread the virus without knowing it. Some people know they have HPV because they have a symptom like genital warts. Women may find out they have HPV through cervical cancer screening (Pap tests) and HPV testing. Health care providers do not usually test for HPV unless they find abnormal cervical cell changes in a Pap test.

### **How can HPV infection be prevented?**

The best way to prevent HPV infection is to abstain from all sexual activity. Even people with only one lifetime partner can get HPV if their partner had previous sexual partners. Using condoms during sex offers good protection against sexual infections like HPV. The HPV vaccines offer by far the best protection if given before sexual activity starts – vaccines do not get rid of existing HPV infections. The HPV vaccine can prevent infections from some of the most common and serious types of HPV that cause warts, cervical, and anal cancers.

## **HPV Vaccine**

### **What HPV vaccines are available?**

Two HPV vaccines are available:

- HPV4 – licensed for males and females. It protects against four types of HPV. These include two types of HPV that cause 75 percent of cervical cancers in women and most anal cancers in men and two types that cause 90 percent of genital warts in both women and men.
- HPV2 – licensed only for females. It protects against the two types of HPV that cause 75 percent of cervical cancers.

### **Who should get the vaccine and when should they get it?**

- Females – the federal Advisory Committee on Immunization Practice (ACIP) recommends routine vaccination for all girls age 11 thru 12 years old against HPV. For unvaccinated females, the recommendation goes up through age 26. Health care providers may also give the vaccine to girls as young as 9 years.
- Males – the ACIP recently approved a recommendation for routine vaccination of boys age 11 thru 12 years. For unvaccinated males, the recommendation goes up through age 21. Health care providers may vaccinate boys as young as 9 years and men aged 22 thru 26 years. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will soon make this recommendation available. Until then, health care providers may vaccinate males using the permissive recommendation that is in place.

To be up-to-date on this immunization, males and females need three doses of the vaccine. Talk to your health care provider about the vaccine schedule. HPV vaccine is not required for school in Washington.

**Are Pap tests still recommended for females who get the HPV vaccine?**

Yes. The HPV vaccine does not protect against all HPV that can cause cancer and warts, so females still need Pap tests.

**Where can I find the HPV vaccine?**

Ask your doctor, nurse, or local health clinic to find out more about HPV vaccine and where you can get it. Patients younger than 19 years of age can get HPV vaccine for free in Washington State. Some health care providers' offices charge an administration fee or an office visit fee. You can ask to waive the administration fee if you can't pay. For people age 19 and older, the vaccine is available from many clinics and pharmacies. Most health insurance plans cover the vaccine for people recommended to get it. Call your health plan to check your coverage. For adults without health insurance, the companies that make these vaccines have programs to help pay for them. Find out if your health care provider participates in these programs.

**For more information on HPV, the Vaccine, and Cervical Cancer:**

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

<http://www.cdc.gov/std/hpv>

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/downloads/vis-hpv-cervarix.pdf>

American Cancer Society

<http://www.cancer.org>

**Sincerely,**

**Health Services  
Snoqualmie Valley School District  
425-831-8023**