HPV VACCINATION – MAKING YOUR MIND UP

Teacher notes

KEY STAGE 3/3RD LEVEL
PSHE/Citizenship lesson plan
OVERVIEW

Subjects
England: PSHE / Citizenship
Wales: Personal Social Education
Scotland: Health and Wellbeing
Northern Ireland: Learning for Life and Work – personal development

Age
12-13 years old

Time required
1 lesson (approx 35mins)

IN THE UK GIRLS AGED 12 -13 ARE OFFERED HPV VACCINATION
INTRODUCTION

This lesson plan helps students understand how they can make informed choices about their healthcare, using HPV vaccination as an example. For many girls, this will be one of the first choices about healthcare they will make, and both boys and girls will have to make these types of decisions in the future.

This lesson uses the information provided by the UK Health Departments to explore the types of questions students might want to ask, ways to access more information and weigh up risks and benefits, giving them the skills to make adult decisions about their healthcare. The session is interactive, using discussion and group activities to engage students.

Supporting resources can be downloaded from: cruk.org/lessons
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will:

• Know that vaccination is a way to prevent people from catching an infection
• Be able to use the Department of Health (DH) information to answer questions about the HPV vaccine
• Know what the HPV vaccination is and its benefits and risks
• Be able to use a simple decision tool to help them weigh up the relative importance of risks and benefits for them

RESOURCES

Download:

• Lesson plans
• PowerPoint presentation (including Decision Tool slide)
• Question cards

from cruk.org/lessons

Download government information about HPV vaccination - see links on page 10

CURRICULUM LINKS

Personal well-being
Healthy lifestyles
Understanding risk
Making informed decisions

SESSION OUTLINE

1. Introduction to HPV vaccination
2. Key facts about vaccination
3. HPV vaccination – helping you decide (discussion using DH information to answer questions and a Decision Tool to think about risks vs. benefits)
4. HPV vaccination – what would you say? (discussion using DH information to explore attitudes and ideas about the HPV vaccine)
5. Sum up and give students information about the vaccination arrangements in your school

NOTES

• This lesson can be used for girl-only or mixed lessons. Further information about boys and the HPV vaccination is provided on page 9 if required.
• This lesson doesn’t cover the scientific basis of vaccination and no knowledge of this is required.
• This lesson plan refers to England, but can be used in the other UK nations. Links to information about HPV vaccination for each nation can be found on page 10.

• If students are currently affected by cancer, for example a family member has the disease, they may find this lesson upsetting. We recommend that you discuss with the student whether they would like to join the class beforehand and if not agree an alternative activity with them. To talk in confidence about cancer, call CRUK’s information nurses on freephone 0808 800 4040.
LESSON PLAN

THE HPV VACCINATION PROGRAMME HAS BEEN RUNNING SINCE 2008
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| Introduction to HPV vaccination | 5 mins | Explain that:  
• In the UK, girls age 12 – 13 are offered vaccination against the human papillomavirus (HPV), which can cause cervical cancer and genital warts.  
• Girls have a choice about whether to have the vaccination and should discuss it with their parents. This lesson will help them to do that.  
• People have to make this type of decision throughout their lives – as you get older you will have to decide about whether you want to have other vaccinations (e.g. for travel), screening for disease (e.g. cervical screening (smear test)), or medical treatments.  
• And if you have a family of your own in future you may have to make decisions on their behalf too – e.g. whether to have your children vaccinated against childhood diseases such as measles.  
• National vaccination and screening programmes are the responsibility of the government. Before they decide to introduce a particular programme, they must be satisfied that overall it will do more good than harm and they will also consider things like how much it costs.  
• Vaccination and screening are unusual because they are given to people who are healthy with the aim of preventing or finding disease, rather than to make people who are ill better. | • None required |
| Key facts about vaccination   | 5 mins | • Show PowerPoint slide 2 and explain to the class that vaccinations:  
  o Help prevent us catching an infection  
  o Prepare our immune system so our bodies recognise the infection and fight it next time we come into contact with it  
  o Can be made of a weak or altered version of an infection. So our immune system will still recognise it in the future, but the vaccine can’t cause the disease itself.  
• Ask the students what vaccinations they remember having. Did they choose to have the vaccination or did their parents/doctor tell them to have it? | • PowerPoint slide 1-2 |
| HPV vaccination – helping you decide | 10 mins | • Ask students to work in pairs or small groups. Hand out all the question cards (depending how many students are in the class, some pairs may get 2 cards), the DH information and student copies of the Decision Tool.  
• Working in their pairs or groups, students should use the DH information to find the answers to the question on their card(s). Students should be encouraged to find the answers fairly quickly to maintain the pace of the lesson. Suggested answers can be found on pages 7 and 8.  
• Show the Decision Tool (either drawn on the board or shown on slide 3). | • Question cards  
• DH information  
• Student copies of Decision Tool  
• Post it notes  
• PowerPoint slide 3  
• Blu-tac or sticky tape for sticking up cards |
### HPV vaccination – helping you decide (cont.)

- Ask for a volunteer from each pair/group to read out their question(s) and the answer(s) they came up with. Then ask the student to bring their card to the front and stick it to the Decision Tool with the help of the rest of the class. When placing the card, they should consider:
  - Is it talking about a risk or a benefit (pro or con)? Or is it a practical question, useful to know but it wouldn’t necessarily affect whether or not they wanted to have the HPV vaccination?
  - How important is the risk or benefit? Students could consider how likely something is to happen, how good or bad it would be if it did happen, or whether the effects of something are short or long term.
- If students have thought of extra questions of their own, add these in at the end (to avoid duplication).
- Each student should also enter information on their individual Decision Tool.

**TIP:** If there is disagreement about where a question should go, remind students that they’re in charge of their own Decision Tool and should make sure it reflects their own opinions, even if they don’t agree with the majority view.

**TIP:** You could also hand out post-it notes so students can make any notes they want to, split questions/answers into separate parts or jot down any more questions that occur to them during the activity.

**TIP:** Use the suggested answers on pages 7 and 8 to help out if students couldn’t find the answer they needed. To keep the discussion moving familiarise yourself with the areas covered by the DH information and dedicate a section of the board to “park” any questions that aren’t covered. Pick these up later when you discuss other sources of information.

### HPV vaccination – what would you say?

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| HPV vaccination – what would you say? | 10 mins | • Show PowerPoint slides 4–8 which contain a number of statements from year 8 students about HPV vaccination.  
• Working in their pairs/groups students should use the DH information and their Decision Tool to decide what they would say to one of the students (or more, if time allows).  
• Ask students to feed back to the class. Do others agree? What would they say?  
• Ask students whether there were any questions that the DH information didn’t answer? Where else could they look for trustworthy information (e.g. NHS website, charity websites such as Cancer Research UK or Jo’s Trust)? | • Powerpoint slides 4-8 |

### Summing up

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| Summing up     | 5 mins | • Let the students know when HPV vaccinations are taking place at your school. If possible, also hand out consent forms, or explain when and where they will receive them and when they will need to return them.  
• Encourage the students to talk about the HPV vaccination with their parents when they get the consent form, and share what they have learned about its benefits and risks.  
• You can also let them know about any other information or sessions your school is organising about HPV vaccination – e.g. parents’ evening.  
• Each student should have a Decision Tool and a copy of the DH information to take away with them. | • Consent forms |
HPV VACCINATION DRAMATICALLY REDUCES THE RISK OF CERVICAL CANCER, WHICH KILLS 940 WOMEN A YEAR IN THE UK
What’s the main disease that HPV vaccination is designed to protect me from?

Cervical Cancer – HPV vaccination is very effective and could prevent 7 in 10 cases of this disease. Every year in the UK around 2,900 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer and around 940 women die from the disease. It’s also the most common cancer among women under 35 years old in the UK.

Apart from cervical cancer, can HPV vaccination protect me from anything else?

Yes, it helps protect you from genital warts too.

Apart from cervical cancer and genital warts, can HPV vaccination protect me from anything else?

There’s evidence that HPV vaccination can help prevent other types of genital cancers too, but these cancers are much less common than cervical cancer.

Does getting the HPV vaccination hurt?

The vaccinations are given as an injection and some people say this is uncomfortable at the time, but it gets better quickly.

Can HPV vaccination make me feel ill afterwards?

Most people feel fine after their injection. Some people feel slightly unwell, but only for a few days.

How safe is the vaccine? Can it make me more likely to get another disease, or to be ill for a long time?

HPV vaccination is very safe. It can have some very rare side effects that can sometimes be serious. But the evidence shows these side effects are very uncommon.

How likely is the vaccination to work on me?

Vaccination protects girls against the 2 types of HPV that cause the majority of cervical cancers (7 out of 10 cases of cervical cancer). It also protects against the 2 types of HPV that cause most cases of genital warts. It reduces the risk of getting cervical cancer and genital warts dramatically.

How many people decide not to have the vaccination after being offered it?

Most people choose to be vaccinated.

How long have people been having this vaccine?

The HPV vaccination programme has been running since 2008. The vaccine that is used changed in 2012 so that it now protects against more types of HPV. The new vaccine is called Gardasil. Gardasil has been in use in lots of countries, like the USA and Australia, for several years.
How has the vaccine been tested and how sure are we about the results?

The vaccine has been tested in thorough tests called clinical trials. These types of trials give us the most reliable evidence for deciding whether a vaccine works or not. These trials have shown that HPV vaccination is very effective at preventing cervical cancer.

Can I still get the disease(s) even if I have the vaccine?

Having the HPV vaccination dramatically reduces the chance of developing cervical cancer, but it is still possible. This is because there are other less common types of HPV that can cause cervical cancer that aren’t in the vaccine. That’s why girls are still invited for cervical screening (which some people call smear tests) later on in life. Cervical screening is a very effective way of preventing cervical cancer and it is thought to save up to 5,000 lives a year from the disease in the UK.

Is there anything I can’t do afterwards? Will someone need to look after me?

You should be able to carry on as normal afterwards. You might feel a bit sick or dizzy, or your arm might hurt a bit, but this shouldn’t last for long.

What do I need to do to have the vaccine? Do I need to arrange it myself?

HPV vaccination is usually arranged through your school. You need to make sure your parents return the signed consent form.

If your school is different, please explain to the students what they should expect to happen and what they need to do.

You can also re-cap this at the end of the lesson.

If I have the vaccine, can that help other people avoid the disease too?

If girls have the vaccine, they will be immune to certain types of HPV. So they won’t be able to get infected with those types of HPV, or pass them on to other people. This also means that people who haven’t been vaccinated (e.g. boys) will be less likely to get these types of HPV infections too. This idea is known as “herd immunity”. In this case it means that when lots of girls have the vaccine, others can be protected from getting genital warts, or an HPV related cancer, as well.

How long does it last? Will I need a booster in the future?

The protection should last for at least 7 years, and maybe much longer. HPV vaccination is still quite new, and there is still research going on that will tell us whether girls will need a booster. If they do, the NHS will let them know.
HPV can infect boys too and can cause diseases such as genital warts and other genital cancers (including cancers of the anus and penis). But in the UK only girls are offered HPV vaccination as part of the national programme. This is for two main reasons. Firstly, because the biggest benefit of HPV vaccination is to prevent cervical cancer, and boys can’t get this disease. The cancer types associated with HPV in men are much less common than cervical cancer is in women. Secondly, when boys have sex with vaccinated girls, they will be less likely to get HPV infections themselves, because the girls will be less likely to carry the infection.

This is the case at the moment, but this won’t help protect all boys. Some boys have sex with boys instead of, or as well as, girls. This means they will not be protected by girls being vaccinated. So Cancer Research UK wants the NHS to find a way to help protect these boys. If the NHS decides to change the rules about who gets the HPV vaccination, they’ll let people know.
USEFUL LINKS

Links to government HPV vaccination information

England

Scotland
www.immunisationscotland.org.uk/vaccines-and-diseases/hpv.aspx#questions

Wales

Northern Ireland
www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/phealth/php/immunisation/hpv.htm

Further information

Cancer Research UK information on HPV and cancer
www.cancerresearchuk.org/cancer-info/healthyliving/hpv/

NHS Choices
Information on how vaccines work -
www.nhs.uk/Conditions/vaccinations/Pages/How-vaccines-work.aspx

NHS Choices information on the HPV vaccine
www.nhs.uk/Conditions/vaccinations/Pages/hpv-human-papillomavirus-vaccine.aspx

Centre of the Cell vaccines activity