

News Release

For Immediate Release

January 27, 2025

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Preventing HPV-Related Cancers

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) encourages parents and young adults to know if they are protected from HPV. Human Papillomavirus or HPV is a common virus that can cause cancer later in life.

“The HPV shot is a cancer prevention vaccine, one of the only ones we have,” explains Melissa Propp, Clinic Manager at SWNPHD. “This is a simple way to help prevent some forms of cancer as you get older.”

HPV is passed from one person to another during skin-to-skin contact with an infected part of the body. It can also be spread through sexual contact. HPV can be spread even when someone with the virus does not have any symptoms.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) about 85% of people will get HPV infection in their lifetime. About 13 million people become infected each year and it is the most common sexually transmitted disease in the US. Most of these infections are asymptomatic (no symptoms) and will clear on their own; however, persistent infections can cause pre-cancers, cervical cancer, or oropharyngeal cancer (of the mouth or throat) in both men and women.

HPV vaccine is recommended for people aged 9 to 26 and is usually given at the age of 11 to 12 along with other routine shots for 7th grade. Adults aged 27-45 may also get the vaccine after discussing their risks with a healthcare provider.

CDC studies continue to prove HPV vaccination works extremely well, decreasing the number of HPV infections and HPV precancers in people who have been vaccinated.

If you are unsure if you or your child is up to date on their HPV vaccines, talk to your healthcare provider or contact the public health nurse at SWNPHD. You can also look up your shot records in the Nebraska State Immunization Information System (NESIIS) at nesiis-dhhs-prod.ne.gov.

For more information on HPV, call SWNPHD at 308-345-4223. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties. You can follow us on Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram or view the website at swhealth.ne.gov.

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