

The Florida Cancer Control and Research Advisory Council (CCRAB- F.S. 1004.432) strongly supports Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination of all females 9 to 26 years of age. HPV is the most common sexually transmitted infection worldwide, and causes most cases of cervical cancer. HPV also causes disorders such as genital warts and cervical dysplasia, a potential pre-cancerous condition. On June 8, 2006, the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved a three-dose HPV vaccine for use in females 9 to 26 years of age. The vaccine has been shown to be safe and effective in preventing infection with the types of HPV that cause 70% of cervical cancers, and 90% of genital warts.

HPV infection and cervical cancer represent an important health concern in the State of Florida. The incidence of cervical cancer in Florida is 26% greater than in the U.S., with a rate of 9.0 newly diagnosed cases per 100,000 women each year, compared to the U.S. incidence rate of 7.1 cases per 100,000. These rates exclude thousands of additional cases of precancerous cervical conditions diagnosed each year in Florida. Recognizing the proven benefits of HPV vaccination, CCRAB urges the Florida State Legislature to consider and implement the following measures:

HPV Education and Awareness

Florida entities focusing on health education, cancer prevention and cancer treatment should take the lead on developing and implementing programs to educate and involve stakeholders (policymakers, providers, parents, young women, SHAC's and school nurses) about HPV, cervical cancer, and the benefits of HPV vaccination.

Vaccines for Children Program

The Florida Department of Health should develop and implement plans to ensure all females ages 9 through 18 have access to and receive FDA-approved HPV vaccines, with an emphasis on the routine vaccination of 11 and 12-year-old females.

Health Coverage

Florida should strongly encourage health insurance plans to cover FDA-approved HPV vaccines, cervix cancer screening tests (Pap tests), and HPV tests.

Access for Uninsured / Underinsured

Florida should work to ensure that the Department of Health, county public health departments, and other public health programs are adequately funded and utilized to provide HPV vaccinations to all uninsured or underinsured females age 9 to 26.

School Entrance Vaccination

Florida should evaluate the feasibility for requiring HPV vaccination for all girls to enter middle school, in conjunction with other adolescent vaccines required at this time. The option for parents to decline vaccination in accordance with the state's existing vaccination policy would be respected.

References

Women in Government Cervical Cancer & HPV Task Force Policy Recommendations for Vaccine Implementation
Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine: A Position Statement of the Society for Adolescent Medicine
Florida Cancer Data System (<http://fcds.med.miami.edu>)
National Cancer Institute Surveillance, Epidemiology and End Results Program (<http://seer.cancer.gov>)