New HPV Vaccine Highly Effective in Prevention of Certain Cancers

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Research shows that human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccines can significantly reduce the risk of cervical cancer. Now, new findings published in The Lancet suggest that a new and improved vaccine can stop cancer of the cervix and other cancers associated with this group of related viruses, reports Newswise.

There are currently 13 types of HPV associated with cancer development, and HPV 16 and 18 are responsible for 70 percent of all cervical cancers. The HPV vaccines Cervarix and Gardasil protect against HPV 16 and 18, while Gardasil is also effective against HPV 6 and 11. Scientists developed 9vHPV, also known as Gardasil 9, to target HPV 6, 11, 16 and 18 as well as five others (HPV 31, 33, 45, 52 and 58) that are most commonly associated with cervical cancer.

To assess the new vaccine, researchers from 18 countries and 105 study sites conducted a Phase III clinical trial. Scientist randomly assigned 14,215 women between ages 16 and 26 to receive either a Gardasil 9 or a Gardasil vaccine and tracked them for six years after the vaccination.

Results showed that compared with Gardasil, Gardasil 9 reduced the women's risk of developing cervical and vulval cancers and vaginal diseases related to human papilloma virus strains 31, 33, 45, 52 and 58 by almost 98 percent. (Both vaccines prevented illnesses associated with HPV types 6, 11, 16 and 18.) In addition, Gardasil 9 helped lower the chances of HPV-associated cervical cell abnormalities and biopsies and the need for definitive therapies to cure those previously mentioned cancers.

"The 9vHPV [Gardasil 9] vaccine is licensed in over 40 countries for the prevention of HPV-related anogenital cancers and precancer and genital warts," said Anna R. Giuliano, PhD, director of the Center for Infection Research in Cancer at Moffitt Cancer Center in Florida and one of the study's researchers. "The results of this study support comprehensive vaccination programs and inform public health decision related to implementation."

Scientists hope that increasing the number of people immunized with Gardasil 9 will help decrease the number of individuals who will develop these HPV-related cancers and diseases that lead to mortalities.

Click here to read how the HPV vaccine can reduce infections that cause oral cancer.

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