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Facts About HPV

HPV spreads through intimate skin-to-skin contact, often during sex. It can cause genital warts or lead to cancer. HIV co-infection greatly increases the cancer risk.

PROTECT YOURSELF

Talk to a healthcare provider about vaccinations and routine HPV-related cancer screenings!

WHY IT MATTERS:

LGBTQIA+ people face unique barriers to HPV prevention and care.

Myth: The vaccine is only for adolescents.

Truth: Adults up through age 46 may still benefit, especially if they have elevated risk factors – ask your doctor.

Myth: Lesbians are low risk.

Truth: Lesbians often have lower HPV rates than women who have sex with men. But HPV can still spread between women, so infection is possible even if someone has only had sex with women.

Low Provider Education: Providers do not always understand HIV+ people need diligent screening for HPV-related cancers or that yearly anal cancer screenings are the new standard.

KEY THINGS TO KNOW

HPV is the most common STI

- You may not even realize you have it

Some strains cause cancer

- HPV is linked to cervical, anal, penile, vulvar, throat, vaginal, and likely colorectal cancers
- Cancer risk is increased by HIV co-infection (i.e. 40 times higher risk for anal cancer)

The vaccine prevents infection

- It's safe, effective, and protects long-term health

WHO IS AT HIGHER RISK?

- People with many sexual partners
- People who have anal sex
- People living with HIV

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM HPV

39,000+ cancer cases/year in the U.S.

- HPV vaccine: Safe. Effective.
- Vaccination can prevent cancers.

Up through age 46 - talk to your doctor

- The vaccine may still be indicated.
- Screen regularly for related cancers, especially if you are HIV-positive.