HPV Vaccination for Cervical Cancer Prevention in Switzerland

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Human papillomavirus (HPV) is responsible for almost all cases of cervical cancer worldwide. It is also responsible for a variety of other cancers including penile; vaginal; vulvar; anal; and oropharyngeal cancers at the base of the tongue and tonsils. There are a very large number of these HPVs, which are classified into groups from high to low risk based on their oncogenic potential. Every year in Switzerland, over 260 women develop cervical cancer, and nearly 90 of them will die from the disease. Cervical cancer affects young women and is the fourth most common cancer in women between the ages of 20 and 49 years. Among the high-risk HPV types, HPV-16 and -18 are the most common and most carcinogenic ones. Together, these two HPV types are responsible for approximately 70% of cervical cancer cases in developed countries. HPV-6 and -11 are directly responsible for 90% of genital warts. There are two effective public health interventions to prevent this cancer: screening and vaccination. The present entry provides an overview of current literature in order to present these preventative approaches and consider their use within a Swiss context. It is hoped that, going forward, this will encourage the implementation and uptake of such interventions.

HPV   cervical cancer   vaccination   prevention

The present entry was compiled and written by the authors, at their respective institutions. The manuscript provides an overview of the current literature on HPV types, associated risks, and public health interventions in order to consider the use of prevention and intervention within the Swiss context. It is hoped that this overview will encourage further thinking from public health actors and other professionals about the implementation and use of prevention and intervention strategies.

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