



Updated January 20, 2017

JOINT POSITION STATEMENT: Safety of Gardasil HPV vaccine

The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC), the Society of Canadian Colposcopists (SCC), the Society of Gynecologic Oncology of Canada (GOC), and the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) are releasing this joint position statement to reaffirm that the Gardasil HPV vaccine, based on the very extensive evidence available to us, and now that the vaccine has been available in Canada for 10 years, is safe and that vaccination remains one of the recommended actions for prevention of cervical cancer and other HPV associated diseases.

As professional medical associations, our work is founded on using evidence-based science to guide recommendations for ensuring that patients receive the highest standards of quality care. The Gardasil HPV vaccine has been thoroughly tested and extensive pre- and post-licensure data on the safety of HPV vaccines are available. The Government of Canada's decision to approve use of HPV vaccination in Canada was based on many clinical trials and studies, all of which concluded that it is safe. Internationally, the safety of HPV vaccination has been reviewed, tested, and approved by the Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety (GACVS) of the World Health Organization (WHO).

The Gardasil HPV vaccine has been used in more than 130 countries, with more than 175 million doses distributed globally. The vaccine has been in clinical use for 8 years and has been found to be both safe and effective in reducing pre-cancers and the high risk HPV lesions that lead to cancers of the cervix, the second most common cancer in Canadian women aged 20 – 45 years, along with several other HPV-related cancers affecting both men and women.

Recent reports in Canadian media may have prompted some to question the safety of Gardasil HPV vaccine. The stories recounted are tragic and should each be questioned and thoroughly investigated. But it would be a tragedy in itself if the recent media reports were to deter Canadians from choosing the option of HPV vaccination - a decision that we know would result in many more women suffering from a preventable cancer. Decisions should be made on evidence and scientific rigor. The work that our associations do to provide reliable and understandable information enables both physicians and individual patients to make good decisions.

Our associations work to provide our members and the patients they serve with the most up-to-date, evidence-based research and recommendations for a variety of health issues. Decisions relating to an individual's health should not be made lightly and we encourage all Canadians to address their concerns and questions with a health care professional.

Additional resources:

[FIGO Statement on HPV Vaccination Safety](#)

[World Health Organization - Human papillomavirus vaccines safety](#)

[HPVinfo.ca](#)

[Public Health Ontario – HPV vaccine safety](#)