



The Vulnerability of Unvaccinated Young Men to HPV Infections: A Call to Action

Sophie Marlowe*

Department of Pathology, Western Carolina University, USA

INTRODUCTION

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is one of the most common sexually transmitted infections globally, and it poses significant health risks. While much of the public health focus has been on preventing HPV-related diseases in women, particularly cervical cancer, it's crucial to recognize the vulnerability of young men to HPV infection, especially those who are unvaccinated. Recent studies highlight a high risk of new HPV infection acquisition among unvaccinated young men, underscoring the need for increased vaccination efforts and public awareness. HPV is a group of more than 200 related viruses, with more than 40 types known to infect the genital area. It is primarily spread through sexual contact, including vaginal, anal, and oral sex. The infection often goes unnoticed because it can be asymptomatic, but it can lead to serious health problems. In men, these include genital warts, penile cancer, anal cancer, and oropharyngeal cancers.

DESCRIPTION

Despite these risks, vaccination rates among young men remain suboptimal, leaving a large population susceptible to new infections. The introduction of the HPV vaccine has been a game-changer in preventing HPV infections and related diseases. The vaccine is most effective when administered before individuals become sexually active, typically recommended for preteens around the ages of 11 or 12. However, vaccination rates in young men lag behind those in young women. This disparity can be attributed to the initial public health messaging, which predominantly targeted girls and women due to the vaccine's early association with preventing cervical cancer. Unvaccinated young men are at a particularly high risk of acquiring new HPV infections due to several behavioral and biological factors. Sexual activity often begins during adolescence and early adulthood, which coincides with the age group that shows lower vaccination coverage. Studies have shown that young

men tend to have multiple sexual partners and may engage in higher-risk sexual behaviors, such as unprotected sex, which increases the likelihood of HPV transmission. Additionally, the anatomy of the male genitalia, with its many microabrasions and mucosal surfaces, provides ample opportunity for HPV to establish an infection. The social dynamics and cultural perceptions surrounding male vaccination also play a role. There is often less emphasis on the importance of vaccinating boys against HPV, partly due to the historical focus on cervical cancer prevention. This oversight can lead to a lack of awareness among young men and their guardians about the vaccine's benefits. Moreover, healthcare providers may not consistently recommend the HPV vaccine to boys as they do for girls, further contributing to the gap in vaccination rates. Addressing this high risk of HPV infection among unvaccinated young men requires a multifaceted approach. Public health campaigns need to emphasize that HPV affects both genders and that vaccination is equally important for boys. Educational initiatives should target schools, communities, and healthcare providers to spread awareness about the risks of HPV and the protective benefits of the vaccine. Healthcare professionals play a critical role in increasing vaccination rates. Routine healthcare visits, such as annual physicals or sports physicals, provide opportunities for doctors to recommend the HPV vaccine. Discussions about sexual health and preventive measures should include information about HPV and its potential consequences for men, encouraging informed decision-making regarding vaccination.

CONCLUSION

Increasing vaccination rates in this population through targeted education, healthcare provider engagement, and accessible vaccination programs is essential. Protecting young men from HPV not only benefits their health but also contributes to the broader goal of reducing the overall burden of HPV-related diseases in the community.

Received: 01-May-2024

Editor assigned: 03-May-2024

Reviewed: 17-May-2024

Revised: 22-May-2024

Published: 29-May-2024

Manuscript No: IPJIDT-24-20438

PreQC No: IPJIDT-24-20438 (PQ)

QC No: IPJIDT-24-20438

Manuscript No: IPJIDT-24-20438 (R)

DOI: 10.36648/2472-1093-10.5.47

Corresponding author Sophie Marlowe, Department of Pathology, Western Carolina University, USA, E-mail: SophieMarlowe7474@yahoo.com

Citation Marlowe S (2024) The Vulnerability of Unvaccinated Young Men to HPV Infections: A Call to Action. J Infect Dis Treat. 10:47.

Copyright © 2024 Marlowe S. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.