

HUMAN PAPILLOMA VIRUS (HPV)

The Forbes Family

How HPV Changed Our Lives



Our daughter, Kristen enjoyed a normal, happy childhood. She was a good student, played rugby, cello, and guitar. Her life was filled with promise. She graduated from college with a successful career path before her. Then tragedy struck. She was diagnosed with cervical cancer. Eleven months later she died at the age of 23.

You try to protect your children. You remember the good times. You cherish the memories. You pray it never happens again. It doesn't have to happen. Cervical cancer has one main cause: HPV. That makes it almost 100% preventable. The HPV vaccine could have saved Kristen's life. Protect your children. Vaccinate them.

There are 79 million people infected with HPV. HPV is the most common sexually transmitted infection, and transmission most commonly occurs in teens and young adults. Most people do not have symptoms or complications from HPV infection, and they are able to rid the virus on their own; however, persistent infection with high-risk HPV types can be dangerous. HPV causes most of the cases of cervical cancer in women and most of the anal, penile and oropharyngeal cancers in males. In addition, most cases of genital warts are caused by HPV.

There is no cure for HPV infection, although the infection usually goes away on its own. It is possible for the virus to remain in a "sleeping" or dormant state and be reactivated years later.

Fortunately, there is a safe and effective vaccine that protects against the most problematic types of HPV. The vaccine is most effective when given before the onset of sexual activity; therefore it is recommended for all boys and girls at age 11 or 12, and can be given alongside the other adolescent vaccines that are required for school. The vaccine can be given up to age 26.

The HPV vaccine is a cancer-prevention vaccine. Please ask your doctor about the HPV vaccine and protect yourself and your children from HPV associated cancers.

For more information, please visit www.vaccinateindiana.org

