



Guide to HPV

What's inside

- What is HPV?
- How do you get it?
- How do you prevent it?
- Can it be treated?
 - HPV testing
 - HPV vaccine

This package was created by Healthy U: Peer Health & Wellness at the University of Manitoba. We are a group of trained, non-judgmental, and confidential student health and wellness leaders on campus.

We provide outreach activities, workshops, and one-on-one support for our fellow students on a variety of health and well-being topics. Feel free to drop in to chat or pick up more information packages.

If you would like to request or attend one of our workshops or events, check out our website for details.

What is HPV?

HPV, or human papillomavirus, is the most common STI. Most of the time it's harmless, but some kinds can lead to genital warts or cancer.

How do you get it?

HPV is spread through skin-to-skin sexual contact. It can be spread without penetration because the virus lives on the skin. It can also live in the mouth and throat, so can be spread this way as well.

How do I prevent it?

There is a vaccine available for men and women which prevents some types of HPV. Ask your doctor if you are eligible for this vaccine or if you have gotten it already (some people received it in elementary school). Unfortunately, the vaccine does not prevent all types, and condoms don't effectively prevent it (although they will still help!). It is important to be screened regularly so you can receive treatment as soon as possible if you get infected.

How do I get tested?

Women can be tested for HPV through a pap test. This can be done by your family doctor. Unfortunately there aren't really tests for men - talk to your family doctor about making sure you stay healthy.

Is it treatable?

There is no cure for HPV, however your body can often fight off the virus on its own before it gets too serious. Regular screening allows your doctor a chance to check cancer from high-risk HPVs before it has progressed.