

# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

KEEPING OUR COMMUNITIES CONNECTED AND ENGAGED

From the Director of Community Health Access & Relations

Issue 28, August 2022



August is here, and it signifies that summer is almost over. It also means that school starts for most communities in our catchment area. For some, it simply marks the beginning of the “dog days” of summer — hot and lazy.

For the Office of Community Outreach & Engagement, August is the month when we will host our annual Community Dissemination Institute. We are excited to bring together roughly 200 Community Health Advisors, clinicians,

researchers and community partners Aug. 28-30 at the Westin in Huntsville. This is our time to share information and build the capacity of our academic and community partnerships while we continue to work to eliminate cancer health disparities. This year’s theme will focus on connecting community individuals to high-quality cancer care, screening and treatment.

August is also National Immunization Awareness Month.

As you prepare your children to return to school, be sure that they are up to date on all their vaccinations, especially the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine. The HPV vaccine can prevent cervical cancer and other related cancers.

August promises to be a busy month with many activities. We look forward to seeing many of you at the Institute!

Continue to stay safe, cool and hydrated.

*Claudia*

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**O'NEAL** COMPREHENSIVE  
CANCER CENTER

**UAB** THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

# the HPV vaccine

## IS CANCER PREVENTION

By Isabel C. Scarinci, PhD, MPH  
Interim Associate Director for Community Outreach & Engagement



If you or a loved one could get a vaccine to prevent some types of cancer, would you get it? The human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine provides safe, effective and long-lasting protection against cancers associated with HPV.

### What is HPV?

HPV is short for human papillomavirus. HPV is a group of more than 150 related viruses that are sexually transmitted. HPV is named for the warts (papillomas) on the skin or genitals that are caused by some HPV types. Other HPV types are more aggressive and cause anal, cervical, penis, throat and vulvar cancers.

### How common are HPV infections?

HPV infections are so common that nearly all men and women will get at least one type of HPV at some point in their lives. That is, at least 75% of people who have been sexually active have been exposed to HPV. The virus will go away on its own for most people, but for

some, the virus will persist and can lead to cancer.

### Who should get the HPV vaccine?

Girls and boys 11-12 years of age should get the HPV vaccine, but the vaccine can be given to children as young as 9 years of age. For children 14 years of age and younger, two doses of the vaccine are required. For teens 15 years of age and older, three doses are recommended.

The FDA has approved the HPV vaccine for people up to age 45, based on health care provider recommendations.

### How well does the HPV vaccine work?

The HPV vaccine works extremely well. Studies show that it provides almost 100% protection against the types of HPV it targets.

Vaccines, like any medicine, can have side effects. Many people who get the HPV vaccine have no side effects at all. Some people report having very mild side effects, like a sore arm. The most common side effects are usually mild and can include: pain, redness, or swelling in the arm; fever, headache or feeling tired; nausea; and muscle or joint pain.

Serious side effects from the HPV vaccination are rare. If your child

has severe allergies to yeast or latex, you should discuss it with the child's doctor or nurse. Be sure to tell the doctor or nurse if your child has any severe allergies.

### Is the HPV vaccine safe?

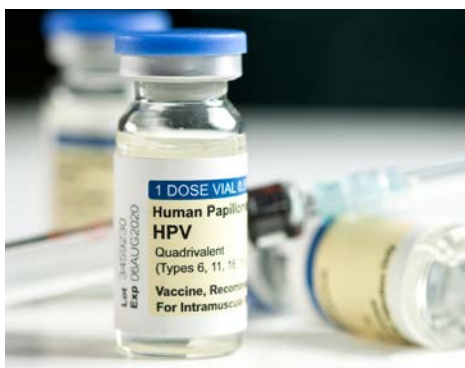
The HPV vaccine went through years of extensive testing before it was approved by the FDA. The FDA only approves a vaccine if it is safe, if it is effective and if the benefits of the vaccine significantly outweigh the risks. Since the HPV vaccine was first approved in 2006, more than 15 years of monitoring and research have continued to show that the HPV vaccine is very safe.

### How much does the HPV vaccine cost?

Most health insurance plans cover the HPV vaccine. The Vaccines for Children program also provides vaccines for children ages 18 and younger who are uninsured or whose health insurance does not pay for the vaccine, who are eligible for Medicaid, and who are considered American Indian/Alaska Natives.

### The HPV vaccine is cancer prevention!

We encourage vaccinating children of all ages, regardless of gender, against HPV and, likewise, encourage family and friends to do the same.



# Hey Fellas

PROSTATE CANCER OUTREACH PROGRAM

The O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center at UAB has been recognized as a leader in community outreach, most notably for its work to increase cancer education and awareness of cancer in medically underserved communities. This work relies heavily on partnerships with key organizations throughout Alabama and Mississippi, including the Mike

Slive Foundation.

An integral part of the Office of Community Outreach & Engagement at the O'Neal Cancer Center's infrastructure is the Community Health Advisor model that identifies natural helpers in local communities to share cancer information and resources. The goal of the Hey Fellas initiative is to provide opportunities for men to have a designated safe space to discuss men's health, with prostate cancer being the primary focus. Preliminary data from a research project funded by the Mike Slive

Foundation suggests that men want opportunities to talk more globally about general interests and health, as a way to introduce the topic of prostate cancer. In a participatory spirit, these sessions will be defined by men, for men, for what men need and want.

The Hey Fellas project will launch in September and will be held in more than 20 counties in Alabama and Mississippi.

For more information, please contact Marcus Glover at [marcusglover@uab.edu](mailto:marcusglover@uab.edu).

## COMMUNITY DISSEMINATION INSTITUTE 2022

The O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center's 2022 Community Dissemination Institute promises to be an enlightening networking opportunity like never before. Hosted by the Office of Community Outreach & Engagement, the meeting will kick off with an opening session that will feature "The Oscars: COE Style," including a red carpet!

Each day will begin with a morning walk and yoga session for those who want to jump-start their day with some physical activity.

Monday, Aug. 29, will be a full day of educational sessions with an opening keynote from Jordan DeMoss, MSHA, vice president of the O'Neal Cancer Service Line at UAB Health System. This keynote will be followed by a candid conversation with several of our cancer doctors to answer your questions regarding cancer screening and treatment. Be sure to have your questions ready. We promise to include some stretch and networking breaks to keep you loose and engaged.

We are excited to have members of the O'Neal Cancer Center senior leadership join the Community Advisory Board. The Institute will also include breakout sessions that provide financial, emotional and educational resources for cancer patients.

The meeting will culminate on Tuesday, Aug. 30, with a town hall to address health equity and



Institute 2021 in Muscle Shoals, AL

discuss highlights from new and existing partners.

The Community Dissemination Institute will have something for everyone, including many restaurants, shops and other activities. During your downtime, walk right out of the doors of the Westin and explore Bridge Street Town Centre. Learn more: [bridgestreethuntsville.com](http://bridgestreethuntsville.com)

If you have any last minute questions or cancellations, please contact Christy Berryman at [COEinstitute2022@gmail.com](mailto:COEinstitute2022@gmail.com).



**Jordan DeMoss, MSHA**  
Vice President, O'Neal Cancer Service Line at UAB Health Systems

# REAL CONVERSATIONS

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

A Health Equity Series

**TUESDAY, SEPT 27, 5:30 PM**

The Office of Community Outreach & Engagement at the O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center at UAB and Genentech present a series of four health equity webinars.

## WEBINAR 2: PROSTATE CANCER

A diverse panel responding to questions and perspectives from the community and other stakeholders.

**GOAL:** To develop recommendations driven by the community to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to achieve optimal health.



REGISTER:

[go.uab.edu/hesPROSTATE](https://go.uab.edu/hesPROSTATE)

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