

## HPV Vaccination Rates Continue to Rise

— Rates for boys were nearly in lockstep with girls in 2020

by [Michal Ruprecht](#), Editorial Intern, MedPage Today

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Overall rates of human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination among adolescents increased by nearly 20% over a 5-year period, according to survey data.

Among teens ages 13 to 17, overall HPV vaccine coverage increased from 56.1% in 2015 to 75.4% in 2020, and rates for those completing the [full vaccine series](#) jumped from 40.3% to 59.3%, respectively, reported Peng-jun Lu, MD, PhD, of the CDC in Atlanta, and colleagues.

The HPV vaccine was first made available to girls in 2006, and then to boys 5 years later. While more girls were vaccinated against HPV in 2015, resulting in a gap of 13%, this plummeted to 3% in 2020 (76.8% for girls and 73.7%

for boys). Annual increases in coverage were higher for boys (4.7 vs 2.7 percentage points per year), the authors noted in *Pediatrics*.

"CDC's latest data show that HPV vaccination coverage among adolescents is increasing, which is important to prevent HPV infections that can lead to several cancers in both females and males," Lu told *MedPage Today*.

The authors also noted that a doctor's recommendation was correlated with greater willingness to receive the vaccine. Of those who were advised to get vaccinated, 80.7% received vaccination compared with 51.7% who were given no such advice. These findings [mirrored another study](#), which found that provider recommendations boosted HPV vaccination rates among kids ages 11 to 12.

Well-child visits were also associated with higher rates of vaccination. Among kids ages 11 to 12, 80.3% who had a visit were vaccinated compared with 64.8% who did not have a visit.

"To further increase HPV vaccination coverage and further reduce HPV-related morbidity and mortality, providers should routinely recommend the vaccine and highlight the importance of vaccination in preventing HPV-related cancers," Lu noted. "Additionally, healthcare providers, parents, and adolescents should use every healthcare visit as a chance to review vaccination histories and ensure that every adolescent receives HPV vaccine and other needed vaccines."

The survey also highlighted differences among racial and ethnic groups, the authors said. For Black and Hispanic teens, vaccination rates were higher compared with their white counterparts, with rates rising approximately 60% to 80% versus 50% to 70% over the 5-year study period.

"Increased vaccine access by the [Vaccine for Children Program](#) or risk-based provider recommendations for HPV on the perceived level of the patient's risk for HPV-related cancer morbidity and mortality might contribute to the increased HPV vaccination coverage in these minority groups," Lu and team explained.

"Targeted strategies should be implemented to providers who serve different communities, particularly those who serve non-Hispanic white children," they added.

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The authors noted that patients with mothers who had an education that was equal to or higher than high school were significantly less likely to be vaccinated compared with those with moms who had less than a high school education, which was in line with [another study](#). Teens from rural areas were also significantly less likely to be vaccinated.

"The association between mother's education and HPV vaccination coverage indicated that interventions should consider maternal education attainment," Lu and colleagues emphasized.

For this study, the group used data from the [National Immunization Survey-Teen](#), and relied on vaccination records from healthcare providers.

A limitation to the study was the low response rate to the survey, but the authors argued that the survey error was not high.

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### Disclosures

The authors reported no conflicts of interest.

### Primary Source

*Pediatrics*

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