Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a highly contagious infection that is transmitted through sexual or skin-to-skin contact. The majority of men and women will acquire HPV at some time in their lives, though most infections are cleared by the immune system within two years. Persistent HPV infection causes cervical cancer in women and anogenital cancers and warts in both sexes.

Cervical cancer in the European Region

- 2nd most common cancer among women aged 15-44 years
- 1 in 100 women will develop cervical cancer
- 28,000 deaths each year

Vaccines are available that target HPV

HPV vaccines are close to 100% effective in preventing the persistent HPV infections that cause 70% of cervical cancer. The most common side effects are mild and resolve after a short time. Serious reactions to the HPV vaccines are extremely rare.

More information is available at: www.euro.who.int/cervical-cancer