



## Cervical cancer vaccine as a priority of public health practices in Iran

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**Letter to Editor**

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### Dear Chief in Editor

Cervical cancer is the third most common cancer in women. In poor countries, it is the second cause of cancer death [1]. According to official report of World Health Organization, about 500,000 new cases of cervical cancer were recorded each year that more than half of them are leading to death. 80 percent of new cases are occurred in developing countries [2]. The mean age of suffered patients is 50-52 years but two picks of disease prevalence are 40-39 and 60-64 years. The origin of the cervical cancer is the human papillomavirus (HPV), and if it enters to the body, the cancer cells were appeared about 12 to 24 months later. HPV is a viral disease that directly involved mouth, throat and larynges, anus, cervix, and penis [3,4]. Sex is the main cause of the transmission of the HPV. Women at any age are in danger. The HPV infection could easily transmitted, even with a single sexual contact via an asymptomatic carrier. Of all 10 women, 8 people are infected with HPV during their lifetime. This infection is also seen in men. Most infections of HPV are self-limited [3]. If the virus persist for a long time, it can cause serious problems in the skin, especially the genital area. It often has not symptoms, so many people are not aware from it [3].

Some strategies exist to prevent cervical cancer, including: rapid

and effective treatment of vaginal and cervical infections to reduce the transmission rate of the virus, use of condom reduces the risk of transmission up to 70%, reduce the number of sexual partners, and HPV vaccination. HPV vaccination can significantly reduce the risk of cervical cancer and immunized persons in almost all cases [1,3-5]. HPV vaccine is currently being administered in many countries according to the WHO protocol, and it seems that cancers of the cervix will be eradicated over the next 20 to 30 years. The best time for vaccine injection is the ages of 14-26, before the first sexual contact [4]. The vaccine is injected into the muscle of the arm in three doses. If the vaccine is injected for women who had previously sex is also beneficial. The duration of immunity from the vaccine

is unknown, but 5 years has been reported. Injecting a vaccine does not mean that a person is exempted from routine cervical cancer screening because there is still a possibility of infection with other HPV genotypes. Till now, 3 kinds of HPV vaccines have been approved by FDA to prevent of this cancer. Their commercial names are Gardasil, Cervarix, and Gardasil 9 [4,5].

Vaccination of cervical cancer is carried out in many countries, currently. At present, 124 countries are used HPV vaccine in their vaccination programs [1]. In Iran, the number of people infected with the HPV disease and was 3.71 million women in 2014 [3], like to other types of cancer has grown steadily in recent years, while this type of cancer could be

controlled and eradicated by vaccination. Now, 25 to 30 million women over the age of 15 in the country are at risk for cervical cancer but it has not yet been injected into the country's vaccination program [1].

Vaccination coverage for HPV-related cancers across the country must be attended by decision makers of the Ministry of Health and is a cost effective project. Therefore, the prevention of cervical cancer is a priority, practical and accessible [1,3]. Considering the prevalence of cervical cancer in Iranian women, and role of unusual sex in the transmission of this virus, this is necessary to give more attention by health policy makers and responsible organizations to include of this vaccine in health care programs.

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