

*Commentary*

## Overview on human papillomavirus

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### ABOUT THE STUDY

HPV infection is a virus that causes growths on the skin or mucous membranes. Human papillomaviruses (HPV) come in over a hundred different varieties. Some HPV infections cause warts, while others can lead to various cancers. In the majority of cases, HPV infections do not cause cancer. However, some types of genital HPV can lead to cancer of the uterus's lower part, which connects to the vagina. Other cancers have been linked to HPV infection, including cancers of the anus, penis, vagina, vulva, and back of the throat (oropharyngeal).

### HPV causes

The virus infects you when it enters your body through a cut, abrasion, or a small tear in your skin. The most common way for the virus to spread is through skin-to-skin contact. HPV infections in the genital region are spread through sexual contact, anal sex, and other skin-to-skin contact. Oral sex is the source of some HPV infections that cause oral or upper respiratory lesions.

### HPV symptoms

**Genital warts:** Flat lesions, small cauliflower-like bumps, or tiny stem like protrusions can all be seen. Genital warts in women usually appear on the vulva, but they can also appear near the anus, on the cervix, or in the vaginal canal.

**Common warts:** Common warts are rough, raised bumps that most commonly appear on the hands and fingers. Common warts are unsightly in most cases, but they can also be painful or prone to injury or bleeding.

**Plantar warts:** Plantar warts are hard, grainy growths on the heels or balls of your feet. These warts could be bothersome.

### HPV in men

Some HPV strains can cause cancer in the penile, anal, and throat in men. Men who have anal sex and men with a weakened immune system may be at a higher risk of developing HPV-related cancers.

### HPV in women

Cervical cancer, as well as cancers of the vaginal, anus, and throat, can be caused by some HPV strains. Cervical cancer changes in women can be detected through regular screening. Furthermore, HPV strains linked to genital cancers can be detected using DNA tests on cervical cells.

### HPV tests

HPV testing differs between men and women.

**Women:** Pap tests are used to detect abnormal cells in women. These symptoms could indicate cervical cancer or other HPV-related issues.

**Men:** An anal Pap test may be performed by some doctors on men who are at a higher risk of developing anal cancer. This includes men who have had anal sex and men who are HIV positive.

### HPV treatments

- Prescription medications, electrical current burning, or liquid nitrogen freezing can all be used to treat genital warts. However, removing the physical warts does not treat the virus, and the warts may reappear.

- Precancerous cells can be removed in a quick procedure at your doctor's office. Chemotherapy, radiation therapy, and surgery are all options for treating HPV-related cancers. Multiple methods may be used in some cases.

Routine HPV and cervical cancer screening is critical for detecting, monitoring, and treating health problems that may arise as a result of HPV infection.

### HPV prevention

**Common warts:** By not picking at a wart or biting your nails, you can prevent the infection from spreading and the formation of new warts.

**Plantar warts:** Wearing shoes, sandals in public pools and locker rooms to reduce the risk of contracting HPV infections that cause plantar warts.

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**Genital warts:** One can lower the chances of getting genital warts and other HPV-related genital lesions by being in a mutually monogamous sexual relationship.

Gardasil 9 is an HPV vaccine that has been approved by the US Food and Drug Administration to protect both men and women against cervical cancer and genital warts.