Throat Cancer from a Virus? Facts YOU should Know

Can I get throat cancer from a virus?
YES. Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is a common virus with more than 100 types (only a few can cause cancer).

LOW-RISK HPV TYPE
Causes warts or bumps in either the:
- Mouth
- Throat
- Or genitals

HIGH-RISK HPV TYPE
Causes cancer in these places:
- Women: throat, cervix, vagina, anus
- Men: throat, anus, penis

How do I catch HPV?
HPV is passed by direct contact during sex
- Your partner must have HPV infection to catch it
- Oral, anal, or vaginal sex
- It may even be passed through open mouth kissing

FOR ABOUT 1-2 OF EVERY 100 PEOPLE, THE VIRUS STAYS AND HAS A CHANCE TO CAUSE CANCER
- Only for high-risk types
- Takes from 10-30 years or more years to get throat cancer

Is HPV common?
- It is the most common sexually transmitted disease in America
- In most cases, the body fights off the virus

What is HPV-related throat cancer?
BY THROAT CANCER, WE MEAN THESE SPOTS:
- Tonsils
- The base (the very back) of the tongue

www.headandneck.org | www.ahns.info
What do I do?

**PREVENTION**

**Get the HPV Vaccination**
- Get an HPV Vaccine called **Gardasil 9** for people in the United States
- Males and females ages **9 to 45**
- Two or three shots, depending on your age

**Avoid Infection**
- Use safe sex practices
- Avoid high numbers of sexual partners
- Use barrier protection, such as condoms

**DETECTION AND TREATMENT**

**Signs you may have HPV-related throat cancer:**
- Painless neck lump for more than 2 weeks
- Pain or problems swallowing
- Throat pain or ear pain
- Changes in your voice

The sooner the cancer is detected, the better your chances to stay alive

**Treatments may include:**
- Surgery
- Radiation
- Chemotherapy

Most cases of HPV-related throat cancer are treatable