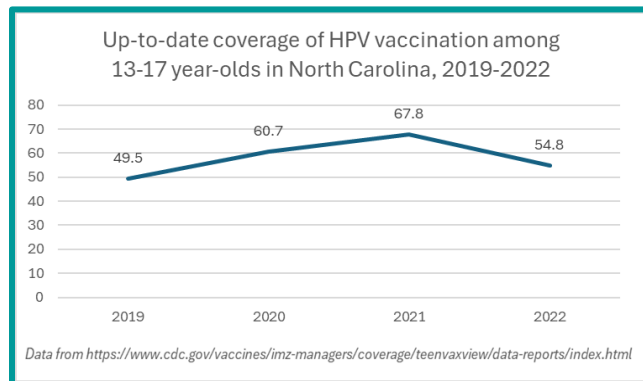


North Carolina ranks 45th in the country for vaccinating our adolescents against HPV and rates have fallen. **We need your help.**

Dear North Carolina Medical Provider:

The HPV vaccine is cancer prevention.

The HPV vaccine safely and effectively prevents over 90% of HPV cancers when boys and girls complete the CDC-recommended HPV vaccination series in early adolescence. However, despite years of progress in increasing adolescent HPV vaccination rates, the rates continue to fall far below those of other routinely recommended adolescent vaccines. In 2022, North Carolina vaccination rates among 13-17-year-olds were 93% for meningitis vaccine and 91% for Tdap vaccine while just over half (55%) of adolescents in our state were [up to date](#) (UTD) with HPV vaccination. More concerning, HPV vaccination UTD coverage rates **dropped 13 percentage points** between 2021 and 2022. Vaccination rates are also suboptimal among uninsured (36%) and Black, non-Hispanic populations (52%), conferring excess HPV cancer risk among vulnerable and minoritized populations. **We can and must do better to protect the future health of young North Carolinians. You can play a key role in this initiative.**



Did you know: You can start vaccinating your patients at 9 years of age! Starting the HPV vaccination series at age 9 is recommended by the American Cancer Society, American Academy of Pediatrics, and the National HPV Vaccination Roundtable (HPVRT), which includes leading thought experts from clinical, public health, and academic research institutions. The Centers for Disease Control also states that HPV vaccination can be started at age 9.

[Benefits of giving a strong recommendation for HPV vaccination at age 9](#) include, but are not limited to:

1. Offering more time to complete the vaccination series by age 13, as recommended by the CDC;
2. Provides protection against HPV well before the first HPV exposure;
3. Decreases caregivers' concerns about their child initiating sexual activity;
4. Can reduce the number of shots administered per visit;
5. Has been shown to increase UTD HPV vaccination rates in several studies.

Our Call-to-Action:

- 1) [Give a strong recommendation for HPV vaccination](#) starting at age 9.
 - a. Example: "Marcus is now 9, so today he'll get a vaccine that prevents six HPV cancers." [Take these steps](#) to recommend HPV vaccination more effectively.
- 2) Every visit counts! Review vaccination status for all adolescent patients and offer vaccination at every visit, even a sick visit or a visit for some other purpose.
- 3) Routinely check your clinic's HPV vaccination rates. Identify patients who are due for an HPV dose and contact them to schedule appointments.

The [National HPV Roundtable](#) and [American Cancer Society](#) have several resources to help increase your HPV vaccination rates.

By working together and prioritizing HPV vaccination, we can create a better future for our youth and reduce the burden of cancer in North Carolina. Thank you for your time and attention to this important initiative!