

10 June 2026

Kia ora parents and caregivers,

Changes to the delivery of HPV vaccination in schools

Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora is writing to let you know about an important change to how human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination is delivered through the School Based Immunisation Programme.

This information is for parents and caregivers of children in Years 7 and 8.

What is changing?

From Term 3 2026, children will be offered one dose of the HPV vaccine at school, with parent or caregiver consent.

The approved HPV vaccination course in New Zealand is currently two doses for children aged 9 to 14 years. However, evidence from studies around the world shows that a single dose provides strong protection against HPV infection and HPV-related cancers¹.

Why the change?

Studies have shown that a single dose provides around 97–98% protection against the high-risk HPV types that cause cancers. Based on this evidence, the World Health Organization now recommends a single-dose HPV vaccination schedule. Many countries, including Australia and the United Kingdom, have already adopted this approach.

This change will help ensure young people have more opportunities to receive HPV vaccination at school, providing protection against HPV-related cancers and supporting efforts to eliminate cervical cancer in New Zealand.

It will also allow our Public Health Nursing teams to focus more on reaching students who have missed important vaccinations, including protection against whooping cough (with the Boostrix vaccine) and measles (with the MMR vaccine). This is particularly important as New Zealand continues to experience measles outbreaks and a whooping cough epidemic.

A second HPV dose remains free and available through general practice (GPs), pharmacies and community health providers at least six months after the first dose, should you want this for your child.

What is the HPV vaccine?

HPV is a very common virus that can cause several cancers later in life, including cervical cancer and head and neck cancers in all genders.

¹ Three doses are recommended for people who are immunocompromised or who start their HPV vaccination course at age 15 years or older.

Most people will be exposed to HPV at some point, often without knowing it. HPV vaccination is the best protection against HPV infection.

Year 7 or 8 is the best time for immunisation, as a pre-teen's immune system is very effective at making antibodies in response to the vaccine and protection is long-lasting.

With high vaccination uptake, New Zealand has the opportunity to eliminate cervical cancer and reduce other HPV-related cancers.

What this means for your child and your family

If your child has **already** received one dose at school:

- No further HPV vaccination will be provided at school.
- Your child will be well protected against HPV.
- A second HPV dose remains free and available from your local GP, pharmacy or community health provider at least six months after their first dose, should you want this for your child.

If your child has **not** yet received an HPV dose:

- They can receive **one dose** at school through the School Based Immunisation Programme.
- If you have not received a consent form for your child to be immunised at school, please contact your school. Alternatively, HPV vaccination can be accessed through your local GP, pharmacy or community health provider.
- A second HPV dose remains free and available from your local GP, pharmacy or community health provider at least six months after the first dose, should you want this for your child.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information.

These changes reflect the latest international evidence on HPV immunisation and will help ensure more young people are protected against HPV-related cancers.

If you have any questions about HPV vaccination, we encourage you to speak to your healthcare provider.

Ngā mihi,



Nikki Canter-Burgoyne

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