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## Women's Health Specialists Welcome Approval of New HPV Vaccine for Males

Ottawa— The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) welcomes the latest breakthrough in the fight to prevent the spread of the human papillomavirus (HPV), the most common type of sexually transmitted infection in Canada.

HPV is transmitted by skin-to-skin sexual contact and can potentially affect anyone who has ever had a sexual encounter, even without penetration. Both men and women can be infected with HPV. However, it is possible for someone to have the virus and not even know it because there are often no signs or symptoms.

“Given that 75% of sexually active Canadians will have at least one HPV in their lifetime, it is great news that both men and women can now be vaccinated against this highly contagious virus. Today, Canada joins Australia and other nations in providing equal protection to men and women when it comes to HPV,” said Dr. Michel Fortier, President of the SOGC.

In order to ensure that people are aware of the HPV public health threat, the SOGC will continue to pursue its public education campaign emphasizing the benefits of vaccination as well as the importance of pelvic exams and Pap smear screening for women to prevent cervical cancer. Canadians are invited to visit the [www.hpvinfos.ca](http://www.hpvinfos.ca) website for more information.

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## **About the Human papillomavirus**

The Human papillomavirus is a sexually transmitted virus that is highly contagious. Because it is transmitted by skin-to-skin contact during sexual activity, anyone who has ever had a sexual encounter, even without penetration, can contract HPV. It is possible for someone to have HPV and not even know it because there are often no signs or symptoms.

HPV is the leading cause of cervical and anal cancer in women. While using condoms is a good protection strategy, they do not provide 100% protection against the transmission of HPV, as the condom may not completely cover the infected area.

HPV is the most prevalent sexually transmitted infection in Canada. There are more than 100 different types of HPV with at least 40 that can cause genital warts and cancers such as cervical cancer.

## **About the SOGC**

*The SOGC is one of Canada's oldest national specialty organizations. Established in 1944, the Society's mission is to promote excellence in the practice of obstetrics and gynaecology and to advance the health of women through leadership, advocacy, collaboration, outreach and education. The SOGC represents obstetricians/gynaecologists, family physicians, nurses, midwives and allied health professionals working in the field of sexual reproductive health. For more information, visit [www.sogc.org](http://www.sogc.org).*