

Australia could become the first country in the world to eliminate cervical cancer

However a poll of 1,000 Australian adults¹ found:

4 out of 5 Australians are unaware Australia could become the first country in the world to eliminate cervical cancer



Half of Australians did not believe they could play a role in eliminating cervical cancer

This included 62% of people identifying as male and 41% of people identifying as female

Common reasons cited:

- Lack of knowledge
- Not having a cervix
- Not having a scientific or medical background

Despite our world-leading cervical cancer prevention programs, many Australians remain unclear about what causes cervical cancer or how to prevent it



Only 5% correctly identified most Australians² will have at least one HPV infection in their lifetime



43% did not recognise HPV vaccination as a prevention strategy



32% did not identify cervical cancer screening as a prevention strategy

Australia was the first country to launch a national HPV vaccination program in 2007 but today many Australians are unaware of the program or catch-up options



41% knew girls in Year 7 or 8 were able to receive the free HPV vaccine



15% knew boys in Year 7 or 8 were able to receive the free HPV vaccine



35% were aware that girls aged ≤ 19 years can receive free HPV vaccines if they have missed doses at school and only 11% were aware that boys aged ≤ 19 years could also do so

Cervical cancer steals life opportunities, but it can be prevented

Cervical cancer is almost always caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV) – a common infection spread during close contact with genital skin during sexual activity.

Cervical cancer can impact women and people with a cervix in the prime of their life. It can rob people of childbearing age of the possibility to give birth in the future. It can lead to death if not identified and treated early.

It is possible to prevent potentially harmful HPV infections through vaccination. It is also possible to identify HPV infection early through screening, before it could lead to causing cervical cancer.



Australia has led the world in cervical cancer prevention

- An Australian scientist, Professor Ian Frazer was the co-inventor of the HPV vaccine now used globally.
- In 2007, Australia became the first country to introduce a funded national school-based HPV vaccination program.
- It was first offered to all female students aged 12–13 years, (as well as all people with a cervix aged up to 26 years until the end of 2009).
- In 2013, the free schools-based HPV vaccination program was extended to male students aged 12–13 years.
- HPV vaccination is provided by immunisation nurses in secondary schools and can also be requested from a doctor at a primary care clinic or other authorised vaccination provider. This ensures that if any doses are missed in school, young people up to age 19 years can catch up.
- Most recently, Australia launched the first universal self-collection cervical screening program.



For more information visit accf.org.au

Notes:

1. Online poll of Australian adults aged 18 years and over, commissioned by Australian Cervical Cancer Foundation and conducted by Dynata in October 2022.

2. ~90% of Australians will have at least one HPV infection in their lifetime.

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