

The Silence Around
Cervical Cancer:

January marks Cervical Cancer Awareness Month. Cervical cancer rarely announces itself early.

There is often no pain, no visible warning, and no immediate disruption to everyday life. This quiet progression is what makes it dangerous and why awareness matters so deeply.

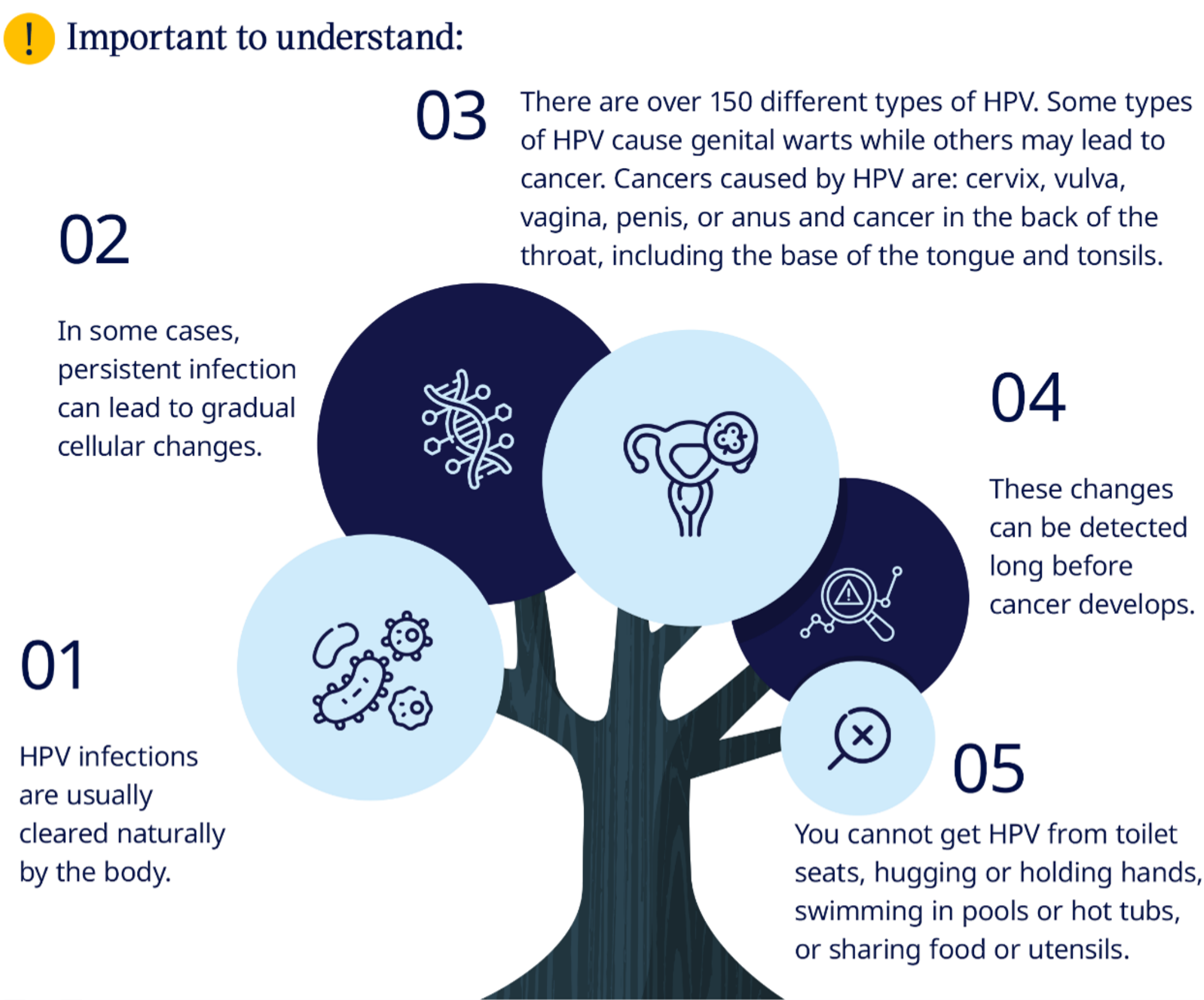
Despite being one of the most preventable forms of cancer, cervical cancer continues to affect thousands of women each year because:

- Early signs are easy to overlook
- Preventive screening is often delayed.
- Conversations around cervical health are still avoided.

The absence of urgency is, in many ways, the greatest risk.

Understanding risk without fear:

Human papillomavirus or HPV is a common family of viruses that cause infection in the body. This virus is so common that many people will encounter it at some point in their lives, often without ever knowing.



Awareness is not about creating fear—it is about creating choice.

This information is not meant to alarm. It is meant to empower. When risk is understood early, prevention becomes possible quietly, effectively, and without fear.

Key shifts in global efforts for cervical cancer prevention:

Health authorities now recommend HPV-based screening as a primary tool for early detection, as it identifies risk earlier than traditional methods.

HPV vaccination programs are being expanded globally and in India, with a growing focus on early adolescence and wider access.

Some countries have begun validating self-sampling HPV tests, helping reach women who delay or avoid clinic-based screening.

These shifts signal a clear message:

Cervical cancer is no longer just something to treat—it is something we can actively prevent.

Prevention is an act of care

Cervical cancer prevention does not rely on dramatic interventions. It relies on timely, informed choices.

Key preventive steps include:

Regular Screening:

Through Pap smears and HPV tests, which help identify changes at a stage when treatment is simple and outcomes are strong.

HPV vaccination:

Which significantly reduces the risk of cervical cancer and is widely recognised as safe and effective.

Recommended immunization schedule:

Boys and Girls Immunization	Maternal Immunization
Dosage Schedule • Girls- Age 9-15 years: 2- dose schedule (0 and 6months) • 15years onwards- 3-dose schedule (0,2, and 6 months) • Boys- (9-15years) – 3 dose schedule (0,2, and 6 months)	Dosage Schedule • Pregnancy - avoided • Postpartum - 3-dose schedule at 0,2, and 6 months

*Ensure your medical practitioner reviews when you should be vaccinated.

In clinical studies, efficacy has been demonstrated in individuals who have received all 3 doses within a 1year period.

Prevention doesn’t demand urgency—it rewards consistency.

Yet, many women postpone these steps not due to neglect, but because life intervenes. Work, family, and responsibilities take priority. Health becomes something to “address later.” Choosing to learn, to screen, and to protect oneself is not an act driven by fear. It is an act of self-respect. Awareness, in this context, is not just information, it is protection.

References

- <https://www.fogsi.org>
- World Health Organization (WHO): Cervical Cancer and HPV
- Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR): Cervical Cancer Prevention Guidelines
- Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): HPV Vaccination and Screening

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