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Human Papillomavirus or HPV can cause genital warts, penile and anal cancer in males. Penile and anal cancers are rare however genital warts affect 200 in every hundred thousand men. An FDA advisory committee has recently voted to recommend a new HPV virus for use in men aged between 19 and 26.

The Gardasil vaccine targets four strains of HPV, strains 6, 11, 16 and 18, which can be transmitted sexually from male carriers to their sexual partners. Strains 6 and 11 are responsible for 90% of genital wart infections and 16 to 18 are responsible for 70% of cervical cancer cases in female victims of HPV.

The FDA advisory committee which debated the use of the vaccine voted 7 to 0 with one abstaining vote that data from the Gardasil clinical trial supported its effectiveness in the prevention of genital warts in men aged 19 to 26, and 7 votes to 1 that the vaccine was safe for men in the same age range. 5000 men in the age category were tested in clinical trials across the world. Three trials were reviewed in total.

The participants were given three shots of Gardasil over a six month period with a control group given a placebo over the same period. Independent doctors checked for HPV in all of the participants. In those participants who had never been exposed to genital warts, Gardasil's effectiveness was 89%, but this figure was reduced in those who had previously been exposed to the infection.

Although the FDA does not have to follow the recommendations of its advisory committees, it usually does so, and there were no serious side effects recorded in the data to go against any decision to use the vaccine in boys of the right age. [FDA consulting](#) will determine whether the advisory committees' recommendations will be followed. Cervical cancer is prevented in females aged between 9 and 26 by using a Gardasil HPV vaccine. Additionally, no serious health problems have been found so far in the countries where boys already receive the HPV vaccine.

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