ECL YOUTH COMPETITION 2021

LIST OF FACTS
for participants

1- HPV

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a group of viruses that are extremely common worldwide. HPV is mostly transmitted through sexual contacts. Virtually anyone who is sexually active, can be exposed to HPV during their lifetime. There are more than 200 types of HPV, however, only few of them can cause cancer. HPV is responsible for virtually all cases of cervical cancers in women as well as of other types of cancers in women and in men. HPV vaccines can help to protect women and men against cancers caused by HPV.

2 - HPV vaccines

HPV vaccines protect against the types of HPV that are most likely to cause cancer. HPV vaccines are administered to girls and boys starting from the age of 9. People that initiate vaccination at ages 9 through 15 years, are administered two doses of the vaccine in an interval of 6-12 months. People above 16 years of age are administered 3 doses in an interval of 1 and 6 months. Once vaccinated, a person develops antibodies that give a strong and long-lasting protection from HPV infections covered by the vaccination.

3 - Target population of HPV vaccination

HPV vaccines are more effective if administered to people before they are exposed to HPV. That is why HPV vaccination is recommended earlier rather than later.
The HPV vaccines protect both females and males from HPV caused infections and cancers. Although cervical cancer is the most common cancer caused by HPV and only affects women, HPV can also cause other types of cancers including to genitals, throat and mouth that can also affect men. Therefore, the HPV vaccine can be administered both to females and males.

4 - HPV vaccine safety

Over 12 years of monitoring and research have shown that HPV vaccines are very safe and do not cause significant side effects or carry serious health risks. Like all vaccines, there is ongoing monitoring of HPV vaccines to ensure they are safe and stay effective. There are currently 3 different types of HPV vaccines available. Each of them went through years of extensive safety testing before they were licensed.

5 - WHO target for HPV vaccine coverage

The WHO recommends HPV vaccination in early adolescence, aged 9–14 years. Vaccination of girls is a priority, as part of comprehensive efforts to eliminate cervical cancer. The WHO Global Strategy to Accelerate the Elimination of Cervical Cancer aims at having 90% of girls vaccinated against HPV by the age of 15 as well as significantly increasing male vaccination uptake by 2030.

6 - Truth vs myths [Fertility]

MYTH: HPV vaccine causes infertility.

TRUE: There is no evidence to suggest that the HPV vaccine causes fertility problems. On the other hand, not getting HPV vaccine leaves people vulnerable to HPV-related cancers. People who develop cancer caused by HPV could require treatment that may limit their ability to have children.

7 - Truth vs myths [Safety]

MYTH: HPV vaccine causes HPV infection and cancer.

TURE: HPV vaccines are very safe. HPV vaccines are made from one protein of the HPV virus that is not infectious, meaning that it cannot cause HPV infections and cancer.

8 - Truth vs myths [Gender]

MYTH: Only girls need to get the HPV vaccine.

TRUE: HPV can infect both men and women. In men, HPV can cause genital warts and different cancers (genitals, throat, and mouth). A man with HPV can also transmit the virus to his sexual partner(s) without knowing.

9 - Truth vs myths [Prevalence of HPV]

MYTH: HPV is uncommon, so there is no need to get the HPV vaccine.

TRUE: HPV infection is the most common sexually transmitted infection worldwide. 8 in 10 females and males will be infected by at least one type of HPV in their lifetime.

10 - Truth vs myths [Age]

MYTH: HPV vaccine only works if administered to boys and girls below 12 years old.

TRUE: The HPV vaccine is most effective when administered to people before they become sexually active. HPV vaccination is therefore recommended in early adolescence, aged 9–14 years. People above 14 who were not vaccinated previously, may still decide to get the HPV vaccine based on discussion with their clinician.