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**NEWS RELEASE**

**Scientific leaders signal major breakthroughs in elimination of cervical and anal cancer**

To mark International HPV Awareness Day March 4th 2022, the International Papillomavirus Society (IPVS) has warmly welcomed two major advances in the elimination of cervical and anal cancers.

HPV (human papillomavirus) is associated with 630,000 cancer diagnoses around the world. Almost all cases of cervical and anal cancers are caused by HPV. These cancers lead to 470,000 deaths, over 300,000 of which are due to cervical cancer. Current tools for the prevention of HPV-related cancers are: vaccination for girls and boys; cervical screening and the treatment of cervical pre-cancers in women.

Vaccination of young adolescents with two vaccine doses has been the recommended standard of care for several years. However, the UK Government’s Joint Commission on Vaccination and Immunization has just issued interim advice recommending a shift to a single dose schedule.

The proposed change has been warmly welcomed by IPVS President Prof Suzanne Garland, who said ‘the evidence that a single dose vaccine schedule for HPV offers a high degree of protection against the types of HPV that cause cancer is now irrefutable. The benefits of this, in terms of logistics, workforce and costs are clear and represent a potential game-changer, particularly for low- and middle-income countries. One less jab and the elimination of cervical cancer within a generation would really mean one less worry for the world.’

Another significant recent breakthrough in the prevention of HPV-related cancer is the ANCHOR study into anal cancer prevention which has found that pre-cancerous changes in the anus can be treated to halt progression of anal cancer in a similar way to cervical cancer. Over 50,000 people are diagnosed with anal cancer each year.

Trial lead Dr Joel Palefsky said ‘Almost all cases of cervical and anal cancer are caused by HPV and while vaccination provides a first line of defense, for many people who either missed out on vaccination, or who simply aren’t covered by local vaccination policies, there has been no effective tool to prevent anal cancer. It is exciting that, for the first time, we have clear evidence of an approach that could reduce anal cancer for both men and women.” Dr Palefsky and his team will be working with various professional organizations to translate these results into standard of care guidelines where possible.

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**Notes to Editors**

1. **For more information please contact Anita Wiseman** admin@askabouthpv.org **or call +44 7940 029444**
2. **International Papillomavirus Society:** The IPVS isthe only organization dedicated to the support of research and public health initiatives related to papillomaviruses,**a major cause** of human cancers and a model for the biology, treatment and prevention of other many cancers.  IPVS serves as the organizational structure for the field of leading biomedical scientists, physicians and other health care providers engaged in papillomavirus research since 1975. [IPVS - Who We Are (ipvsoc.org)](https://ipvsoc.org/who-we-are/)
3. **International HPV Awareness Day:** On March 4th around 120 organisations worldwide, facilitated and supported by IPVS, deliver events and activities to raise public awareness and understanding of HPV. Find out more about the One Less Worry Campaign and the information available in many languages about HPV at [AskAboutHPV.org.](https://www.askabouthpv.org/)
4. **Sources**
	1. [COVID-19 and cervical cancer - A pandemic’s impact and a global response](https://ncdalliance.org/news-events/blog/covid-19-and-cervical-cancer-a-pandemic%25E2%2580%2599s-impact-and-a-global-response)
	2. [Sharp Declines in Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening](https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/p0630-cancer-screenings.html#:~:text=The%2520decline%2520for%2520cervical%2520cancer,end%2520of%2520the%2520observation%2520period.)
	3. [Single Dose of HPV Vaccine Yields Long-Term Protection from Many Cancer-Causing Types](https://www.cancer.gov/news-events/cancer-currents-blog/2020/hpv-vaccine-single-dose-long-term-protection)
	4. [JCVI interim advice on a one-dose schedule for the routine HPV immunisation programme](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/single-dose-of-hpv-vaccine-jcvi-interim-advice/jcvi-interim-advice-on-a-one-dose-schedule-for-the-routine-hpv-immunisation-programme)
	5. [Treating Anal Cancer Precursor Lesions Reduces Cancer Risk for People With HIV](https://www.ucsf.edu/news/2021/10/421591/treating-anal-cancer-precursor-lesions-reduces-cancer-risk-people-hiv#:~:text=In%2520a%2520randomized%2520clinical%2520trial,anal%2520cancer%2520were%2520significantly%2520reduced.)

**Spokespeople**

**Professor Suzanne Garland**, IPVS President and internationally-recognized clinical microbiologist and sexual health physician with a special interest in infectious diseases of women. She is Professor of Reproductive & Neonatal Infectious Diseases, Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, University of Melbourne and Director of the Women’s Centre for Infectious Diseases in Melbourne. Regular advisor to the World Health Organisation (WHO) on sexual and reproductive health infections, cervical cancer and human papillomavirus (HPV). Prof Garland can talk about:

-Efficacy of HPV vaccination for cancer prevention
-Challenges and opportunities in advancing the WHO Cervical Cancer Elimination Strategy
-Examples of triumphs in HPV vaccination programmes

**Dr. Joel Palefsky** is the founder and chairperson of the IPVS International HPV Awareness Day campaign, and past President of IPVS. He is a leading expert on HPV infection, specialising in the impact of HPV on men and those living with HIV, and in reducing the risk of anal cancer. He is founder and past President of the International Anal Neoplasia Society. He is currently a professor at the University of California, San Franciso and leads research and clinical trials into HPV-related infections. Joel can talk about:
- The urgent need to prevent, treat and vaccinate against HPV infection in men
- HPV infection in men and women living with HIV
- Prevention of anal cancer
- [HPV Awareness Day Campaign 2022 ‘One Less Worry’](https://www.askabouthpv.org/)