More strong evidence that HPV vaccination is good for girls

By ACSH Staff — June 17, 2011

A newly published study in the Lancet[1] lends more support to the CDC’s recommendation that girls as young as 11 and 12 should be vaccinated for human papillomavirus (HPV). In their study, Dr. Julia Brotherton and colleagues reported a nearly 50 percent decrease in precancerous cervical lesions in girls age 12 to 17, two years after Australia introduced a nation-wide HPV vaccination program. The results suggest the great potential of adolescent and pre-adolescent vaccination for preventing cervical cancer in women, a cancer which is caused by persistent HPV infection.

While both the authors of the study and officials at the CDC are enthusiastic about the apparent success of the Australian vaccination program, they acknowledge that more rigorous epidemiological studies are needed to reinforce the correlation between adolescent vaccination and reduced rates of HPV in women.

ACSH’s Dr. Gilbert Ross, too, acknowledges the limitations of the study, which failed to take into account the vaccination status of the girls and women studied. However, he says, the results look very promising and certainly don’t at all diminish the importance of adolescent vaccination for HPV.

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