

INCORPORATING HPV VACCINATION STATUS IN YOUR PRACTICE'S **PATIENT HEALTH HISTORY**

In 2012, the American Dental Association released a Statement regarding HPV and oropharyngeal cancers, stating that "...dental care providers should learn about and should educate patients about HPV and its connection to this type of cancer. ¹"

One simple way for dental health providers to bring this topic up in conversation is by asking about HPV vaccination status as part of a comprehensive patient health history². By asking about HPV vaccination status, patients and parents will begin to understand its connection to oral health and be prepared for you to discuss HPV vaccination as part of your preventive health recommendations.

If you already ask about vaccinations as part of your health history form, simply add HPV to the list or use the same language as with the other vaccines. If you do not ask about other vaccinations, here is some sample language that you could use:

[Have you/Has your child] received the HPV (Human Papillomavirus) Vaccine?

Yes- Completed all shots.

Yes- Started but have not completed all shots.

No- Have not received any shots

By asking this question, you can now tailor your recommendations. For a patient who has started but not completed the HPV vaccine series, you can commend them for taking the first step to prevent cancer and encourage them to visit their primary care provider for their other dose(s).

1. American Dental Association Council on Scientific Affairs (2012). "Statement on Human Papillomavirus and Squamous Cell Cancers of the Oropharynx." Available at: <https://www.ada.org/en/about-the-ada/ada-positions-policies-and-statements/statement-on-human-papillomavirus-and-squamous-cel>

2. Wagner, R. and A. Villa (2017). "Oral HPV Infections and the Role of the Dental Professional." Journal of the Massachusetts Dental Society 65(4): 12-15.