

# A Pharmacist's Guide to Initiating Discussions about HPV Prevention Against Head and Neck Cancers

HPV infections are commonly associated with causing cancers related to the genital areas, including cervical, vulvar, vaginal and anal cancers, but it can also cause head and neck cancers.<sup>1</sup> The focus of this tool will be on Gardasil 9 and its use to prevent head and neck cancers as it is currently the only HPV vaccine in Canada approved (with conditions) for this indication.<sup>ii,iii</sup> For general information about all HPV vaccines and their approved indications, please refer to the [HPV chapter](#) of the Canadian Immunization Guide.<sup>^</sup>

## Gardasil 9 – Prevention of Diseases<sup>ii</sup>

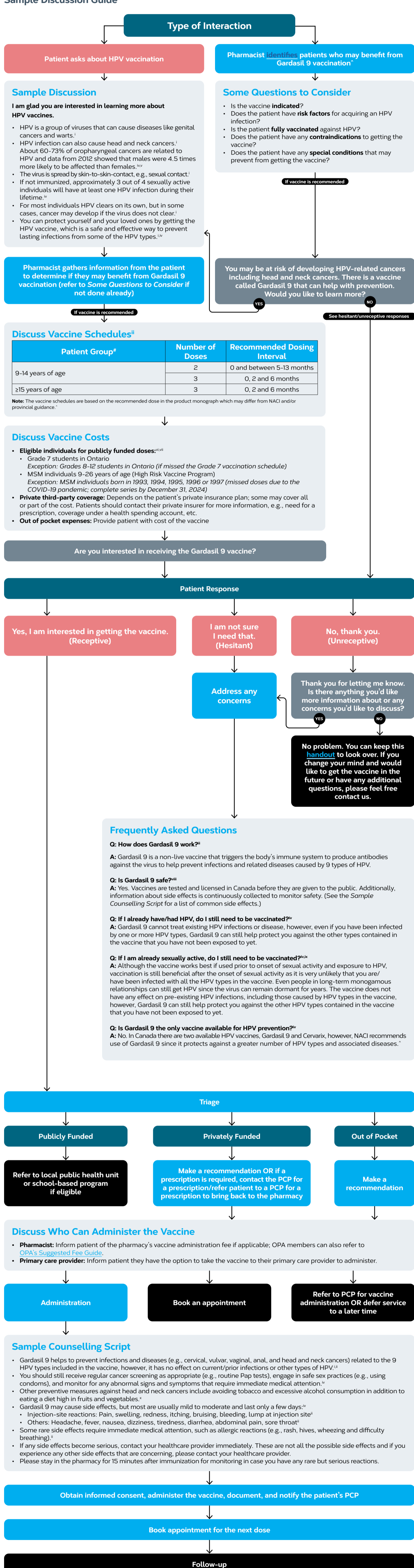
For individuals 9–45 years of age <sup>^</sup>	HPV-types	♀	♂
Cervical cancers	16, 18, 31, 33, 45, 52, and 58	✓	✗
Vulvar cancers		✓	✗
Vaginal cancers		✓	✗
Anal cancers		✓	✓
Oropharyngeal cancers <sup>^</sup>		✓	✓
Head and neck cancers (others) <sup>^</sup>		✓	✓
Genital warts	6 and 11	✓	✓

Gardasil 9 also provides prevention against some precancerous or dysplastic lesions associated with the above HPV types

## Strategies to Identify Appropriate Patients



## Sample Discussion Guide



<sup>^</sup> The Canadian Immunization Guide chapter on HPV vaccines was updated on July 24, 2024 with new recommendations. These may not all be reflected in this tool. Information on any updates to provincial guidance were not yet available at the time of publication of this tool.  
<sup>ii</sup> Approved (with conditions) pending additional studies to verify the vaccine's clinical benefit  
<sup>iii</sup> Immunocompetent, non-HIV infected  
<sup>iv</sup> HPV: human papillomavirus; MSM: men who have sex with men; NACI: National Advisory Committee on Immunization; PCP: primary care provider

**DISCLAIMER**

This tool was developed by the Ontario Pharmacists Association (OPA) with a grant provided by Merck Canada. The information provided in this document is intended to assist pharmacists with initiating discussions with patients about Gardasil 9 for the prevention of head and neck cancers but is not meant to be comprehensive and does not replace professional judgement and responsibilities. It is provided without warranty of any kind by OPA and OPA assumes no responsibility for any errors, omissions or inaccuracies therein. The decision for use and application of this document is the responsibility of the user. OPA assumes no liability for such use and application or any resulting outcomes. It is the responsibility of the pharmacy professional to use professional judgment in evaluating this material in light of any relevant clinical or situational data. It is intended to supplement materials provided by regulatory authorities, and should there be any discrepancies, municipal, provincial, and federal laws, policies and guidelines shall prevail. The information provided in this document are current at the time of publication. Pharmacy professionals are encouraged to confirm information with additional resources.

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