The American Cancer Society Reminds Parents that the HPV Vaccine Should be Part of the Back-to-School Routine

ATLANTA, Aug. 8, 2019 /PRNewswire/ -- Prepping for back-to-school means buying new supplies, clothes, and backpacks, but it's also time to make sure your children are protected from cancer. This fall, the American Cancer Society (ACS) is reminding parents that making sure girls and boys ages 11-12 receive the HPV (human papillomavirus) vaccine should be part of the back-to-school routine.

Every year in the United States, more than 33,000 men and women are diagnosed with cancers caused by HPV. HPV has been linked to six types of cancer, including cervical cancer and throat cancer. The HPV vaccine can prevent most of these cancers. But vaccination rates remain low; in 2017, only about half (49 percent) of adolescents were up to date on the HPV vaccine.

The HPV vaccine is safe and effective. As with all vaccines, HPV vaccine safety is constantly monitored through surveillance and reporting systems, and these systems continue to show that HPV vaccination is safe. Studies continue to prove that HPV vaccination is effective, decreasing the number of infections and HPV pre-cancers in young people since it was introduced.

ACS is leading Mission: HPV Cancer Free, an initiative to eliminate vaccine-preventable HPV cancers, starting with cervical cancer. "HPV vaccination offers the very rare opportunity to help prevent not just one but six types of cancer. Just two doses of this vaccine, given to kids at age 11 or 12, and starting as early as nine, can prevent 90% of HPV cancers," said Debbie Saslow, PhD., managing director, HPV & GYN Cancers for the American Cancer Society.

Infection with HPV is very common, and four of five people will get it at some point in their lives. It is best to complete the series by your child's 13th birthday. The body develops better protection against HPV at this age than in the late teens and early 20s.

The HPV vaccine is cancer prevention. A good first step for parents is to talk to your child's health care provider. To learn more about the HPV vaccination go to cancer.org/HPV.

SOURCE American Cancer Society

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