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# News Release

# UDOH, Local Physicians Urge HPV Vaccine for Ages 11 and Up

**(Salt Lake City, UT) –** You can't protect your children from everything, but thanks to the HPV vaccine, you can protect them from HPV-related cancers. This is the driving force behind a series of new videos featuring local physicians launched by the Utah Department of Health's (UDOH) Cancer Control Program (UCCP) and University of Utah Health Care, whose physicians tell parents about the importance of getting their sons and daughters vaccinated.

"There is a significant gap between awareness of the HPV vaccine and knowledge of it," said Lynette Phillips, UCCP Program Manager. "The goal of these videos is to answer some of the most common questions parents and adolescents have about the vaccine and to let them know the vaccine is cancer prevention."

The vaccine protects against cervical and several other cancers in both males and females and is recommended for girls and boys at age 11 or 12. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in Utah, only 25.2 percent of females and 14.4 percent of males aged 13-15 had completed the recommended three-dose series of shots in 2014. Nationally, among adolescents aged 13-15 years, coverage for the three-dose series of HPV vaccine was 34.4 percent among females and 20.6 percent among males. HPV vaccination coverage lags behind other adolescent vaccination estimates and these percentages fall well below the national goal of 80 percent coverage for adolescents.

"As researchers worldwide search for cures for many types of cancer, we already have a proven prevention technique that could eliminate one form of cancer. That's why we need to help protect our children by promoting HPV vaccination," said Dr. Brandon

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Reynolds, an obstetrician and gynecologist with University of Utah Health Care featured in the videos.

"We hope this campaign will encourage parents to talk to their child's pediatrician about HPV," said Phillips. "The cancers and complications caused by HPV can have lifelong consequences for children and adults. The vaccine is a safe and easy way to protect our kids from one more health risk."

Parents with questions about the HPV vaccine should contact their health care provider, pharmacist, or local health department. To see the videos, visit http://cancerutah.org/hpv/your-questions-answered.php.

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*The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.*