Suspicions over HPV vaccine

What is the issue?

\n\n

\n
- Globally there are reliability debates over the efficiency of HPV vaccine.
\n
- India has planned introduced the vaccine in its universal immunisation program,despite small risks of the vaccine.
\n

\n\n

What is HPV?

\n\n

\n
- Human papillomaviruses (HPVs) which can be easily spread through direct sexual contact, from the skin and mucous membranes of infected people to the skin and mucous membranes of their partners.
\n
- HPV infection is so common, most people get HPV infections shortly after becoming sexually active for the first time.
\n
- Low-risk HPVs can cause skin warts on or around the genitals and anus and recurrent respiratory problems.
\n
- High-risk HPVs, which can cause cancer Cervical cancer, Anal cancer, Oropharyngeal cancers (cancers of the middle part of the throat)
\n
- Most high-risk HPV infections occur without any symptoms, go away within 1 to 2 years, and do not cause cancer.
\n
- Persistent infections with high-risk HPV types can lead to cell changes that, if untreated, may progress to cancer.
\n
- HPV vaccination can reduce the risk of infection by the HPV types targeted by the vaccine.
\n

\n\n

What are the issues with the HPV vaccine?

\n\n

\n
- There are suspicions over the HPV vaccine that they may be causing a trio of rare illnesses such as
\n

\n\n

\n
1. Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (POTS) - It is an abnormal increase in heart rate when a patient stands up.
\n
2. Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS) - It is unexplained, severe pain in a limb.
\n
3. Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) - It is debilitating tiredness that leaves patients unable to function normally.
\n

\n\n

\n
- All three are poorly understood conditions and often go undiagnosed.
\n
- POTS and CFS sufferers may have other symptoms like nausea, sleep disturbances, and chronic pain.
\n
- It is important to note that these are only suspicions, there is no evidence that these illnesses are caused by the vaccine.
\n
- On the other hand, even if POTS and CRPS are shown to be caused by the vaccine, the incidence in vaccine recipients is likely to be very low.
\n

\n\n

What is the stand of India over the vaccine?

\n\n

\n
- India has the largest burden of cervical cancer in the world and about 70,000 women die of it each year.
\n
- Around 70% of these cases are caused by infections from HPV strains, which

the vaccines prevent.
\n
- So India is introducing HPV vaccines in its Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP), by which millions of girls in India aged between 9 and 14 years will get the vaccines for free.
\n
- Given the rarity of these side effects and high burden of disease, India has taken the decision to go ahead with the vaccine.
\n
- India senses that there is a small risk of the vaccine being linked to the syndromes, but the benefits outweigh the risks.
\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: The Hindu

\n

