Cervical cancer is one of the leading causes of death in women, and more than half of all cancers are caused by cervical cancer. 95% is caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV).

Transmission

Transmission usually occurs during sexual relationships or skin-to-skin contact with the person who has the virus. It can be transmitted even with the use of condoms and in monogamous relationships.

It can also be transmitted:

- by means of infected objects or materials.
- by direct contact with wounds and abrasions
- in rare cases, from mother to child during childbirth.

The data

HPV is one of the most common infections of the reproductive tract. It causes a variety of diseases in both men and women, such as cervical cancer, cancers of the penis and anus, mouth and oropharynx (throat), and anogenital warts.

HPV vaccination, screening tests and treatment of precancerous lesions are essential to prevent cervical cancer.

The disease

HPV vaccine is highly effective in preventing 70% of cervical cancers, as well as penile and anal, mouth and oropharyngeal (throat) cancers.

High coverage rates in girls (>90%) reduce the risk of infection in boys.

44 countries and territories in the Region vaccinate against HPV.

Vaccines

New studies have shown that one dose may offer comparable protection.

Calendar

2 doses of vaccine, six months apart:

- Girls aged 9-14 years, before they become sexually active.
- Some countries include boys.
- 44 countries and territories in the Region are vaccinated against HPV.

In addition, if vaccination is extended to other groups it can be administered:

- One or two doses for adolescents and females 15-20 years of age
- Two doses, six months apart, for women 21 years of age and older.