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One-dose Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine for protection against cervical cancer: WHO

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The option for a single dose of the vaccine is less costly, less resource intensive and easier to administer



The 4-7 April convening of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization (SAGE) evaluated the evidence that has been emerging over past years that single-dose schedules provide comparable efficacy to the two or three-dose regimens.

SAGE's review concluded that a single-dose Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine delivers solid protection against HPV, the virus that causes cervical cancer, that is comparable to 2-dose schedules. This could be a game-changer for the prevention of the disease; seeing more doses of the life-saving jab reach more girls.

"The HPV vaccine is highly effective for the prevention of HPV serotypes 16 & 18, which cause 70% of cervical cancer," said Dr Alejandro Cravioto, SAGE Chair.

SAGE recommends updating dose schedules for HPV as follows:

- one or two-dose schedule for the primary target of girls aged 9-14
- one or two-dose schedule for young women aged 15-20

- Two doses with a 6-month interval for women older than 21.

Immunocompromised individuals, including those with HIV, should receive three doses if feasible, and if not at least two doses. There is limited evidence regarding the efficacy of a single dose in this group.

WHO’s recommendations will be updated following further consultation across stakeholders.