

**SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH**  
**STATEMENT ON**  
**HPV/CERVICAL CANCER VACCINE**

My name is Martha Nolan and I am Vice President for Public Policy at the Society for Women's Health Research. As the nation's only non-profit organization whose mission is to improve the health of all women through research, education and advocacy, the Society considers the availability of a potential vaccine that can prevent the human papillomavirus (HPV) that causes cervical cancer an incredible breakthrough that has the ability to spare thousands of women the fear of cervical cancer and the suffering associated with it. The Society strongly urges an expedient review and decision and, dependent on positive efficacy and safety concerns, approval to allow this breakthrough advance to be available to women as soon as possible.

As you are aware, HPV is an extremely common sexually transmitted infection. While 90 percent of HPV infections are harmless, in other cases, they increase women's risk for cervical cancer. Two strains, HPV 16 and 18, cause 70 percent of cervical cancers. As many as 80 percent of American women will become infected with HPV at some point in their lives. An estimated 10,000 women in the United States are infected with cervical cancer each year, and nearly 4,000 of them die from this disease. The U.S. spends \$6 billion annually on screening and follow-up procedures for cervical cancer. These statistics illustrate that cervical cancer is a serious health threat for American women, and prevention efforts are critically important.

As the FDA reviews the new HPV vaccine, with a second vaccine expected later this year, we have the opportunity to eradicate this terrible disease and move toward a world without cervical cancer. Both vaccines have shown great promise in clinical trials, providing 99 percent protection from HPV infection. We want serious consideration of the research and evidence as these vaccines have the potential to dramatically reduce the incidence of cervical cancer, dysplasia, and the cost to the medical community of treating these conditions. In addition, the Society would encourage good Phase Four clinical studies be implemented upon approval of these vaccines to monitor their widespread use in the population.

The ability to successfully prevent HPV infection would have a tremendous impact on the lives of women and men, but particularly young women. Currently, women live in fear of contracting HPV. These vaccines could eliminate this threat, and this deadly cancer, within our lifetimes.

The Society for Women's Health Research encourages the FDA to seriously consider the research and evidence for these two HPV vaccines as quickly as possible, as women's lives are at stake. The Society would recommend that there be research and vaccine development in all areas to improve the lives of women, as they are vital to women's health. We appreciate your efforts to improve the health of American women and prevent unnecessary suffering and early death due to cervical cancer. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today on this important topic.