

Knowledge and Attitudes towards HPV Vaccination among Latina Mothers in an Urban, Low-Income Area

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Background & Purpose

- Disparities in morbidity and mortality rates of cervical cancer and other HPV-related cancers persist among Hispanic women both nationally and in New Jersey
- HPV vaccination rates are disproportionately lower among Hispanic, urban, and low-income groups.
- Information is lacking about knowledge and views of diverse Hispanic populations on HPV vaccination, particularly regarding the vaccination of boys.
- This study examined knowledge and attitudes towards HPV vaccination among Hispanic mothers, in low-income urban areas. The study objectives were to:
 - Assess knowledge, attitudes, and acceptability for HPV vaccination for girls and boys
 - Identify barriers and facilitators for HPV vaccination initiation and completion identified by the mothers
 - Examine cultural and other factors that are useful for the development of targeted interventions to promote HPV vaccination among this population

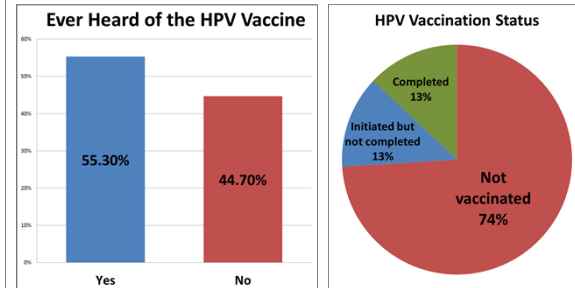
Methods

- Qualitative study, using 12 focus groups (FGs) with low-income Hispanic women recruited from a multi-site community health center and an out-patient department of an urban community hospital in NJ
- 2-hour, audio-taped, semi-structured discussions
- A bi-lingual doctoral student and the Co-PI facilitated the focus group discussions

Study Sample (N=132)

- Mean Age: 40 years old (range: 21-71)
- Hispanic Origin
 - 41.7% Caribbean Hispanic
 - 16.7% South-American
 - 41.5% Central-American
- 85% spoke only Spanish
- 64% have high school or less education
- 52% are uninsured
- 71% unemployed
- 82% have less \$14,000 annual Income
- 62% married or partnered
- Mean number of HPV vaccine-eligible children
 - Total: 2.6 (range 1-6)
 - Daughters: 1.7 (range 0-4)
 - Sons: 1.6 (range 0-5)

Preliminary Study Results



	Ever Heard of the HPV Vaccine	Received HPV Vaccination
Mother's Age		
< 40 years old	50.0%	30.6%
40 years old or more	61.7%	23.3%
Hispanic Origin		
Caribbean	61.8%	30.9%
Central/South American	50.6%	24.7%
Language		
English	90.0% ***	45.0% *
Spanish	49.1%	24.1%
Education		
High school or less	51.2%	29.3%
More than high school	62.0%	24.0%
Employment		
Unemployed	52.7%	22.8%
Employed	61.5%	38.5%
Income (annual)		
\$14,000 or less	49.1% **	24.1%
More than \$14,000	83.3%	41.7%
Mother's Marital Status		
Married/partnered	56.1%	29.3%
Single/separated/divorced	54.0%	24.0%
Insurance Status		
Insured	64.1% *	39.1% **
Uninsured	47.1%	16.2%
Ever heard of the HPV Vaccine		
Yes	---	46.6% ***
No	---	3.4%

Note: * = P ≤ 0.05, ** = P ≤ 0.01, *** = P ≤ 0.001 using Chi-square test

Knowledge about the HPV Infection

- Mothers lacked knowledge about HPV infection
- Varying degrees of knowledge by Hispanic Latino cultural group background:
 - Caribbean Latina mothers had higher knowledge about the infection than Central/South American mothers
- There was some confusion about the transmission of HPV infection
- There was some confusion between HPV and HIV
- Most of the women who indicated they heard of the infection did not know what the acronyms stood for, the mode of transmission, and way to prevent it

Knowledge and Attitudes Towards HPV Vaccination

- Overall, mothers lacked knowledge about HPV vaccination
- Varying degrees of knowledge by Hispanic Latino cultural group background
 - Caribbean Latina mothers had higher knowledge about the infection than Central/South American mothers
- Caribbean Latina mothers had higher intake of the HPV vaccine (both initiation and completion)
- Overall, women were receptive and believed that the vaccine should be given to both males and females
- Barriers to HPV vaccine initiation included:
 - Concern about possible side effects (among all mothers)
 - Avoidance of talking about sex with children (mostly among South American mothers)
- Healthcare provider recommendation was the strongest facilitator for HPV vaccine initiation and completion

Useful Strategies to Improve HPV Vaccination

- Healthcare provider recommendation and communication about the HPV vaccine
 - Strong recommendation
 - Addressing side effects and safety concerns
- School-based approach in educating mothers about the vaccine
- Use of text messaging and smart phone technology to educate mothers and send reminders for completion of the 3-dose series of the vaccine
- Making appointments for the second and third doses immediately after receiving the first dose to improve HPV vaccine completion

Discussion & Implications

- The recognition of HPV infection as a sexually transmitted infection was not well understood
- Lacking knowledge about the HPV infection and vaccination across groups
- Nearly all women agreed that perceived seriousness of HPV would be a motivating factor in getting vaccinated
- A few women expressed the need for more information about the vaccine such as cost, side effects, and safety
- There was an overwhelming level of acceptability towards the HPV vaccine
- The importance of the health care provider's recommendation in the mother's decision making process for HPV vaccination
- Clearly evident need for education across all groups
- More research is needed to examine knowledge, practices, and views of health care providers on HPV vaccination
- There is a need for interventions that improve health care provider communication with Latina mothers about HPV infection and vaccination
- Need for additional studies using comprehensive approaches in order to combat disparities in HPV-related cancers, particularly cervical cancer, in Hispanic populations

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