HPV, or Human Papillomavirus, is a common cancer inducing virus that effects nearly one in every four people, adding up to around 80 million globally. This ability for HPV to spread quickly is attributed to it being able to infect individuals via exposure to bodily fluids. While HPV goes away on its own in most cases, not causing any damage, the few cases in which it doesn’t can serious health problems. Amongst these are genital warts, and even worse, cancer, of which many strains are not permanently treatable.

 While HPV isn’t cancer itself, it causes biological changes in humans that can potentially lead to cancer. Examples of such are cervical, anal, and oropharyngeal (mouth and throat) cancer in women, as well as penile, anal, and oropharyngeal cancer in men. Even more problematic is that individuals affected with such conditions may not show symptoms for months or even years after their initial contact with HPV.

 Because there is no way to determine whether or not an HPV infection for an individual will be long or short term, the best option is to get vaccinated. While many women are already vaccinated for HPV, as they were the focus of HPV treatment since the release of its vaccine in 2007, men have been seriously neglected up until the last several years for protection against the disease. However, while many people now understand that HPV can affect both men and women, there are many males who are left unvaccinated, while 9000 males are infected every year with cancers that cannot be permanently treated due to HPV. Given this information, it is important for individuals, especially males, to check if they have been vaccinated for HPV and to consult their physicians for future treatment if they have yet to be treated.

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