

Ethiopia National Immunization Technical Advisory Group

Ministry of Health, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Recommendation on single-dose HPV vaccination

Meeting date	09 March 2023
Issue	Single-dose HPV vaccination: Technical guidance and recommendation
Rationale	<p>Globally, cervical cancer is the fourth leading cause of cancer and cancer deaths in women. In Ethiopia, it is the second most prevalent cancer among women adults (13.4%), next to breast cancer (30.2%). Prevention of cervical cancer is best achieved through the immunization of girls before they become sexually active.</p> <p>Ethiopia introduced HPV vaccination in December 2018, targeting 14-year-old girls. Since the introduction, the ministry follows a two dose schedule with a minimum interval between the first and second dose. The HPV vaccination service delivery strategies are in-school and out-of-school. However, implementation challenges are observed with the two-dose schedule including increment of dropout and adherence to optimal interval between doses.</p> <p>Current evidence suggests that a single dose HPV vaccination has comparable efficacy and duration of protection as a 2-dose schedule and may offer program advantages, be more efficient and affordable, and contribute to improved coverage. Data from immunogenicity trials, post-hoc analyses of efficacy trials, and post-licensure observational studies among females have demonstrated that a single dose of HPV vaccine is sufficient to elicit an immune response that provides similar protection as a multi-dose regimen against initial and persistent HPV infection. Although findings are subject to information bias and confounding, most studies found very high rates of sero-positivity for vaccine-type HPV genotypes, regardless of the number of doses received.</p> <p>From a public health perspective and given to the substantial benefits and program advantages of a single dose schedule in Ethiopia, the NITAG (National Immunization Technical Advisory Group) was requested to advise the ministry and recommend on this issue.</p>
Recommendation	After a thorough deliberation, the E-NITAG recommended postponed the decision of introducing a single-dose HPV vaccine until sufficient evidence is gathered. The E-NITAG agreed to re-examine its recommendation after additional review of evidence on the single-dose schedule of the HPV vaccine in its next meeting.