



ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Acceptability of human papillomavirus vaccine in mothers from Valencia (Spain)[☆]



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Abstract

Introduction: In October 2008, the Valencian Community started its human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination schedules for 14 year-old girls. The aim of this study is to assess knowledge about HPV infection and its vaccine among the mothers of these girls, and to identify factors associated with the willingness to vaccinate their daughters.

Materials and methods: Cross-sectional study by means of a questionnaire to mothers of girls born in 1995, and attending secondary schools in the province of Valencia during 2010–2011. Cluster stratified random sample ($n = 1279$). Statistical analysis: percentages, confidence intervals, OR, Chi-squared and multivariate logistic regression contrasts.

Results: A total of 833 (65.1%) questionnaires were completed. The results obtained showed that, 76.6% of mothers had vaccinated their daughters against HPV; 93.8% knew about the vaccine, particularly through television (71.5%); and 78.5% received positive advice from a health professional which increased the vaccination of their daughters (OR: 2.4). There was low overall knowledge about HPV infection and vaccination. Confidence of the mothers in vaccines as a preventative method increases the HPV vaccination (OR: 3.8). The first reason for refusal was the fear of adverse events (45.6%).

Conclusions: Apparently, the media does not influence the willingness to vaccinate. It would be desirable to minimise the perception of risk of the vaccine. Positive health advice from a health professional can have a positive effect on vaccination. There is a gap between the level of knowledge and decision-making to vaccinate.

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PALABRAS CLAVE

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Conducta madres;
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Práctica

Aceptabilidad de la vacuna contra el virus del papiloma humano en madres de la provincia de Valencia (España)

Resumen

Introducción: La Comunidad Valenciana inició en octubre del 2008 el programa de vacunación contra el virus del papiloma humano (VPH) en niñas de 14 años. El objetivo de este estudio es evaluar los conocimientos sobre la infección por VPH y su vacuna en madres de adolescentes e identificar los factores asociados a la predisposición de vacunar a sus hijas.

Material y métodos: Estudio observacional transversal mediante cuestionario dirigido a madres de alumnas nacidas en 1995 matriculadas en centros de secundaria de la provincia de Valencia durante 2010-2011. Muestra aleatoria estratificada por conglomerados ($n=1.279$). Análisis estadístico: porcentajes, intervalos de confianza, OR, contrastes chi al cuadrado y regresión logística multivariante.

Resultados: Ochocientos treinta y tres cuestionarios completados (65,1%). El 76,6% de las madres habían vacunado a sus hijas contra el VPH. El 93,8% conocía la vacuna, sobre todo a través de la televisión (71,5%). El 78,5% recibió consejo favorable de un profesional sanitario, lo que mejoró la vacunación de sus hijas (OR: 2,4). Los conocimientos globales sobre la infección por VPH y la vacuna fueron bajos. La confianza de las madres en las vacunas como método preventivo mejora la vacunación contra VPH (OR: 3,8). El miedo a los efectos adversos (45,6%) fue el primer motivo de rechazo.

Conclusiones: No parece que los medios de comunicación influyan en la decisión de vacunar. Sería conveniente minimizar la percepción de riesgo ante esta vacuna. El consejo del profesional sanitario actúa a favor de la vacunación si este interviene activamente en sentido positivo. Existe una brecha entre nivel de conocimientos y toma de decisión para vacunar.

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Introduction

The vaccine against human papillomavirus (HPV) is administered to young adolescents to prevent potential diseases from developing in future decades, especially cervical cancer.¹ There is evidence that the attitude of parents is key in achieving a high acceptability of the vaccine.²

In Spain, the Consejo Interterritorial de Salud (Interterritorial Council of Health) has recommended the inclusion of this vaccine in the routine schedule for preadolescents aged 11–14 years.³ The Autonomous Community of Valencia introduced vaccination of girls 14 years of age in 2008 with a 3-dose series. When the second dose was given to this initial cohort (first trimester of 2009) two cases of adverse events were registered following administration of the vaccine.^{4,5} Following two months of investigation by a group of experts, the Agencia Española del Medicamento y Productos Sanitarios (Spanish Agency of Medicines and Health Products) and the European Medicines Agency concluded that there was no causal relationship between the administration of the vaccine and the observed adverse events.^{4,5} These events were subject to extensive media coverage,^{6,7} which may have had a negative impact on the acceptability of this vaccine.⁸ The immediate effect was a noticeable decrease in the vaccine coverage (12%) of the second cohort compared to the first.⁵ Subsequent cohorts (fourth, fifth and sixth) have recovered from this decline and reached coverage rates above 70%.

The aim of this study, which was conducted after the aforementioned events, was to assess the knowledge about HPV infection and the HPV vaccine and the willingness to

vaccinate the adolescent daughters of mothers residing in the province of Valencia.

Methods

We conducted an observational, cross-sectional study for which we designed an ad hoc questionnaire to assess the prevalence of vaccination. The study was approved by the ethics and research committee of the Centro Superior de Investigación en Salud Pública (Superior Centre for Research in Public Health) of the Health Department of the Autonomous Community of Valencia.

The target population were the mothers of girls enrolled in secondary schools in the province of Valencia during the 2010–2011 academic year. The schools were selected randomly after stratifying by type of school ownership (private, charter and public schools) and geographical location (urban, semi-urban and rural schools), obtaining a total of 31 schools.

Mothers were selected by random cluster stratified sampling. We included mothers of adolescent girls that met the official criteria for administration of the tetravalent HPV vaccine and belonged to the 1995 birth cohort. We excluded mothers that did not consent to their daughters' participation in the study and mothers whose daughters chose not to participate.

The mothers completed a self-administered questionnaire between September 2010 and May 2011. The questionnaire had several sections: sociodemographic characteristics; personal perception of vaccination as a method

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