

ATTITUDES TO HPV VACCINATION AMONG YOUNG ADULTS 18-30 YEARS – A POPULATION BASED SURVEY IN SWEDEN.

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Objectives: A population based survey was undertaken in Sweden in 2007 to investigate attitudes to HPV vaccination among young adults.

Methods: We invited 16 000 women and 4 000 men aged 18-30 years, randomly selected from the Swedish population. Response rates were 55% and 43%, respectively.

Results: Median age was 24 years for women and 23 years for men. Only 20% of women, and 13% of men had heard about Human Papillomavirus (HPV) previously. Of women 7% stated they would not get vaccinated against HPV, 18% did not know, 34% would get vaccinated if it was for free, while 41% were willing to pay. Corresponding figures among men were 12%, 20%, 37% and 31%. There was a clear trend of higher willingness to get vaccinated the younger the adult ($p < 0.01$). In multivariable logistic regression analyses willingness of HPV vaccination (for free or at some cost) was higher for women than men (OR=1.69, 95% CI=1.00-2.87). Women with a university education were less willing to get HPV vaccinated (OR=0.76, 95% CI=0.60-0.96) than women with basic education, while men showed no difference. Having heard about HPV increased willingness to get vaccinated for women (OR=1.74, 95% CI=1.49-2.02), and to less extent for men (OR=1.42, 95% CI=0.94-2.17). Considering vaccination in general as very or fairly secure increased the willingness of HPV vaccination for women (OR=2.12, 95% CI=1.76-2.56) and men (OR=2.43, 95% CI=1.51-3.91). Considering vaccination in general as very or fairly efficient increased the willingness of HPV vaccination for women (OR=3.21, 95% CI=2.28-4.54) and to less extent for men (OR=2.38, 95% CI=0.98-5.78). The younger the age at first vaginal intercourse, the higher the willingness to vaccinate for women ($p < 0.01$), but not for men. For both women and men two or more sex partners during last year, compared to one sex partner, increased the willingness of HPV vaccination (OR=2.14, 95% CI=1.87-2.47, and OR=1.93, 95% CI=1.47-2.58, respectively). For men only, having had anal sex increased the willingness of HPV vaccination (OR=1.40, 95% CI=1.04-1.87) and the same tendency was found for oral sex (OR=1.41, 95% CI=0.90-2.20).

Conclusions: The general knowledge about HPV among young adults is very low, while the willingness to vaccinate themselves is high. HPV vaccination is affected by general acceptance of vaccination, but also by factors related to the risk of HPV infection.