

# Rx Trend Insight Alert

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The following information is an update on Gardasil® per Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommendation. CIGNA does not take responsibility for any medication decisions made by the prescriber or pharmacist. For further information, please contact your CIGNA Pharmacy Management clinical account manager or CIGNA HealthCare client manager. For additional information, see <http://www.merck.com> or call Merck & Co at: 908-423-1000.

## Update on Gardasil® (Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Recombinant Vaccine) – ACIP Recommendations

- BACKGROUND** On June 8, 2006, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved Gardasil® [quadrivalent human papillomavirus (HPV) recombinant vaccine] to prevent cervical cancer and cervical, vulvar, and vaginal pre-cancers, genital warts and low-grade cervical lesions in girls and women 9-26 years of age.<sup>1,2</sup>
- UPDATE** On June 29, 2006, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommended that Gardasil be routinely given to girls 11-12 years old. The ACIP recommendation also allows for vaccination of girls beginning at nine years old and vaccination of girls and women 13-26 years old.<sup>3</sup>
- DOSING** According to ACIP, three doses of the new vaccine should be routinely given to 11 or 12 – year old girls. The vaccine is given through a series of three injections over a six-month period. The second and third doses should be given two and six months, respectively, after the first dose. However, the vaccination series can be started as early as nine years old at the discretion of the physician or health care provider. The committee also recommends a "catch-up" vaccination in girls and women 13-26 years old because they will benefit from getting the vaccine. The vaccine should be administered before onset of sexual activity (i.e., before women are exposed to the viruses), but females who are sexually active should still be vaccinated.<sup>3,4</sup>
- COST** The retail price of the vaccine is \$120 per dose or \$360 for a full series.<sup>4</sup>
- COVERAGE** CIGNA HealthCare covers Gardasil consistent with the ACIP recommendation, in girls and women 11-26 years of age and in girls 9 and 10 years old at the discretion of the physician and health care provider. This coverage is offered under CIGNA HealthCare medical plans with preventive health benefits.

*Note: The information contained within this document provides a brief overview of the subject, derived in part from data from third parties and is meant as a reference only.*

### References

1. Merck&CO;Inc. Gardasil® ([human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine] prescribing information. Whitehouse Station, NJ: Merck&CO; Inc. June 2006.
2. FDA Licenses New Vaccine for Prevention of Cervical Cancer and Other Diseases in Females Caused by Human Papillomavirus. Available at: <http://www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/NEWS/2006/NEW01385.html>. Accessed on June 8, 2006.
3. CDC's Advisory Committee Recommends Human Papillomavirus Virus Vaccination. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/od/oc/media/pressrel/r060629.htm>. Accessed on June 30, 2006.
4. HPV Vaccine Questions and Answers. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/std/hpv/STDFact-HPV-vaccine.htm#hpvvac4>. Accessed on July 6, 2006.

