Factors associated with Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine acceptance among Haitian and African-American parents of adolescent sons

Natalie Pierre-Joseph, M.D., Jared P. Walsh, M.A., Myrdell Belizaire, B.A., Courtney Porter, M.P.H.

1. Department of Pediatrics, Boston University School of Medicine, Boston, MA, USA
2. Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Boston University School of Medicine, Boston, MA, USA

Introduction/Purpose
Genital Human Papillomavirus (HPV) infection is the most common sexually transmitted infection in the US. Approximately 90% of anal and penile cancers, 100% of cervical cancers, 40% of vaginal and vulvar cancers, 20-60% of oral cancers, and 90% of genital warts are attributable to HPV. In October 2011, the Advisory Committee for Immunization Practices (ACIP) updated their statement to recommend HPV vaccination for 11-21 year old males for the prevention of genital warts and anal cancers. Currently little data exists on parental views towards HPV vaccination in adolescent sons. As the US black community is ethnically diverse, we set out to explore cultural differences in attitudes towards HPV vaccination in African-American parents and Haitian Immigrant parents of adolescent sons. These insights will be used to create a short, practical, physician-based, educational intervention geared toward increasing HPV vaccine acceptance.

Methodology
• Semi-structured interviews of African-American (AA) and Haitian Immigrant (HI) parents of boys aged 9-17 from an urban primary care clinic in an academic center.
• Eligible parents were those who self-identified as African-American or Haitian, spoke English or Haitian Creole, and whose sons had never received HPV vaccination.
• We collected demographic information, knowledge about HPV, parental attitudes toward HPV vaccination, parents’ intent to vaccinate their children, and actual HPV vaccination rates.

Results
Vaccination Rates
• Both groups of parents preferred to receive vaccine-related information from their physicians (AA 91.9%, HI 100%) and expressed high levels of trust in their physicians (AA 94.6%, HI 90.5%).
• Most parents indicated they would accept HPV vaccination if recommended by their physician (70.3% of AA, 61.9% of HI), but only 19.4% of parents stated that their doctors offered vaccination and medical record review indicated that 10.8% of AA and 23.8% of HI sons received vaccination.
• Parental knowledge of HPV was poor: 40.5% of AA and 52.4% of HI parents were unable to correctly answer any questions about HPV.

Parental Attitudes Towards HPV Vaccination
• Haitian parents: As HPV is a sexually transmitted infection, and sex is considered an adult activity in Haitian culture, Haitian parents stated HPV vaccination should be the adolescent’s choice. They were more likely to decline vaccination based on their religious beliefs as well as have a lack of information about HPV and the vaccine.
• African-American parents: Felt that HPV vaccination was within the purview of parental responsibility. They were more likely to decline vaccination based on lack of information, and specifically asked for research data on vaccine safety and efficacy.

Summary/Conclusions
HPV knowledge is very low in both African American and Haitian parents, and vaccination rates are very low in their adolescent sons. Improving knowledge and vaccination rates will require culturally competent educational interventions addressing the distinct informational needs of each community. Physicians are uniquely situated to provide culturally competent education and should address patients’ vaccination preferences by routinely offering HPV vaccination to male patients.

Support
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References
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. ACIP recommends all 11-12 year-old males get vaccinated against HPV. 2011 Oct 25