



SOGC Annual Clinical Meeting, Vancouver, June 22-27, 2006

Eradicating Cervical Cancer

For the first time ever, a vaccine is on the horizon that has the potential to prevent cervical cancer:

What's So Different About HPV?

When: Saturday, June 24, 2006 at 7:30 PDT

The Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is a sexually transmitted disease that often goes undetected ...with tragic consequences. HPV causes cervical cancer, a disease which kills 400 women each year in Canada. That's 40 times the number of women in Canada who die from AIDS. Getting a handle on the diagnosis, care and prevention of HPV is priority one to ensure this possible public health epidemic is averted.

Preventing the Spread of HPV – It Can Be Done

When: Sunday, June 25th, 2006 at 10:30 PDT

The Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine Development.

Regulatory approval is expected soon ...which means this vaccine could be available in Canada next year. And not a moment too soon ... between three and nine million Canadians are currently infected with HPV. Experts explore the latest research on the new vaccines with the exciting potential to virtually eradicate cervical cancer, a disease that claims the lives of nearly 300,000 women each year.

These sessions are open to the media. To set up an interview with a presenter please contact Patricia Robitaille at (604) 873-0080.

To register to attend these sessions, please go to the Media Desk on site at the Westin Bayshore, June 21-27, 2006.

Biographical Notes for Dr. Deborah Money

Dr. Money is an Associate Professor at the University of British Columbia and is the Head of the Division of Maternal Fetal Medicine, Dept. of Obstetrics and Gynaecology located at the Children's and Women's Health Centre of B.C.

She is an Obstetrician/Gynaecologist who obtained fellowship training in Infectious Diseases at the University of Washington. She returned to UBC in 1994 and developed a clinical and research program in Ob/Gyn Infectious Diseases with research focussed on viral pathogens in women and in pregnancy, specifically HIV, HPV, Hepatitis C and genital herpes. She was the Associate Director for STD/AIDS Control for BCCDC from 2001-2002.

She is currently the chair of the Infectious Diseases committee for the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC), and a Member of the Infectious Diseases Society of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (IDSOG).

Biographical Notes for Dr. Robert Lea

A native of Charlottetown, Dr. Robert Lea is retired from clinical practice. He is Associate Professor with the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology with a cross appointment to the Family Medicine Department at the Dalhousie University Medical School. His main interests include infertility and endocrinology.

Past President of the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC), he was an active member of the SOGC Executive, Council and Finance Committee. Dr. Lea is currently chair of Breast Diseases Committee of the SOGC.

Biographical Notes for Dr. Diane Harper

Dr. Diane Harper completed her undergraduate and graduate degrees at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston, Massachusetts, in the fields of Chemical Engineering and Polymerics. She received her medical degree (1986) from the University of Kansas in Kansas City, where she also did residencies in OB/GYN and Family Medicine (1990).

She received the American Cancer Society Cancer Control Career Development Award, which allowed her to attend Stanford University, studying Medical Decision Making/Cost Effectiveness Analysis as part of her Master's of Public Health thesis (1995).

Dr. Harper is a Professor at Dartmouth Medical School, in Hanover, New Hampshire, in the Departments of OB/GYN and Community and Family Medicine. She has developed and directs the Gynecologic Cancer Prevention Research Group based at the Norris Cotton Cancer Center, part of the Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center, in which work on all aspects of HPV associated diseases, specifically cervical cancer prevention is conducted.

The Human Papillomavirus (HPV)

Background

The human papillomavirus, or HPV, is one of the most common family of viruses and is the world's most common sexually transmitted infections. It infects cells inside and outside of the body, including surfaces of the skin, lining of the mouth, tongue, throat, tonsils, vagina, penis, cervix, and anus.

Most people who get HPV don't have any signs or symptoms and may unknowingly spread the disease. The most common means of transmission is by skin-to-skin contact with the penis, scrotum, vagina, vulva, or anus of an infected person. Kissing or touching a partner's genitals with the mouth can also transmit HPV. Using a condom does *not* guarantee protection since the virus can be on an area of skin not covered by the condom.

There are many different types of HPV viruses. Over 80 types of HPV have been reliably identified, but researchers believe there are likely over 200. Some types of HPV can cause common skin warts and plantar warts (warts on the soles of the feet), while over 30 other types of HPV affect the anogenital tract (on or between the anus and genitals). Carcinogenic types of HPV cause most cervical cancers and 70% are caused by HPV types 16 and 18 which can cause pre-cancerous lesions, cervical cancer and other genital cancers and are referred to as carcinogenic or 'high-risk HPV types'.

Not to be confused with skin warts, genital warts are mostly caused by HPV types 6 and 11. These two types can lead to genital warts and are referred to as 'low-risk HPV types' because they rarely cause cancer. In women, genital warts can appear on the vulva, urethra, cervix, anus or thighs. In men, they can appear on the penis, scrotum, anus or thighs.

Genital warts may last for years and eventually go away. Even if this happens the HPV virus can remain dormant in the body and the manifestation can return at a later date. The natural course taken by an HPV infection varies over time and from one person to another.

For more information on HPV:

1. sexualityandu.ca, administered by the SOGC
http://sexualityandu.ca/eng/adults/STI/whatarethey_hpv.cfm
2. HPV: the most common sexually transmitted infection (SOGC Media Guide)
<http://sogc.org/media/pdf/advisories/FinalEnglishPrimerApril18.pdf>
3. Health Canada
http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english/iyh/diseases/hpv-vph_e.html
4. Public Health Agency of Canada
http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/std-mts/sti_l.html

Canadian STI Facts and Statistics

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are an important public health issue and a major contributor to rising health care costs in Canada.

It is estimated that 75% of Canadians will have at least one HPV infection in their lifetime.

10% to 30% of the Canadian adult population (between three and nine million Canadians) is currently infected with HPV,

The highest rates of HPV infection are found in people under the age of 25.

The prevalence for cancer-causing types of HPV in different groups of females ranges from 11% to 25%.

Most people (66%) who have sexual contact with a partner infected by genital warts will develop warts themselves, usually within three months of contact.

HPV causes cervical cancer which kills 400 women each year in Canada. That's 40 times the number of women in Canada who die from AIDS.

The prevalence of genital HPV infections increases with increasing numbers of sexual partners.

Touted as the first of its kind, a yet to be approved HPV vaccine has been found 97% effective in protecting women from the virus that causes most cervical cancers.

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About The SOGC:

The SOGC is one of Canada's oldest national specialty organizations. Established in 1944, the Society's mission is to promote excellence in the practice of obstetrics and gynaecology and to advance the health of women through leadership, advocacy, collaboration, outreach and education. The SOGC represents obstetricians/gynaecologists, family physicians, nurses, midwives and allied health professionals in the field of sexual reproductive health.