

**UAMS News Bureau**

Office of Communications & Marketing  
4301 West Markham # 890  
Little Rock, AR 72205-7199

uamshealth.com/news



**News Release**  
**Jan. 31, 2024**

**Media Contacts:**

Leslie W. Taylor, 501-686-8998  
Wireless phone: 501-951-7260  
[leslie@uams.edu](mailto:leslie@uams.edu)

David Wise, 479-713-8679  
Wireless phone: 501-259-1628  
[dwise@uams.edu](mailto:dwise@uams.edu)

**UAMS Researchers Link HPV Vaccine Hesitancy  
to Lack of Accurate Information**

FAYETTEVILLE — Limited or inaccurate information about the HPV vaccine has created apprehension among Arkansas parents to vaccinate their children against the virus, according to researchers in the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) Office of Community Health & Research.

Researchers noted that increased efforts in health care providers' offices to provide education about the shot could increase uptake.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), about 90% of cervical cancers are attributed to the human papillomavirus (HPV). In 2020, almost 12,000 new cases of cervical cancer were reported, disproportionately affecting Black, Hispanic, American Indian and Alaskan Native women in Arkansas.

Researchers surveyed Arkansas parents who vaccinated their children against HPV despite experiencing hesitancy about the vaccine. Study participants said their hesitancy was influenced by concerns about adverse side effects and by perceptions the HPV vaccine was a new vaccine.

According to the CDC, Gardasil 9's HPV vaccine — the only HPV vaccine available for use in the United States — has been monitored and researched for more than 15 years and has been determined to be safe and effective.

The study, [Understanding HPV Vaccine Hesitancy and What Helped Hesitant Adopter Parents Have Their Children Vaccinated Despite Their Hesitancy](#), demonstrated that discussion and information from health care providers could help parents overcome their concerns about the vaccine.

“Our study documents the importance of providing clear, understandable information about HPV vaccine safety, side effects and effectiveness,” said Rachel Purvis, Ph.D., an assistant professor in the UAMS Office of Community Health & Research and lead researcher on the study, which was published in the *Journal of Pediatric Health Care*.

Participants in the study reported that information in the doctor’s office was limited; however, multiple study participants stated that health care providers within their own social circles provided clear and understandable information about the vaccine, which helped influence their decision to vaccinate their children.

“This study’s findings show the continued importance of health care professionals as trusted sources of vaccine information, and provider recommendations encourage the hesitant to become vaccinated,” Purvis said. “

For more information about the HPV vaccine, visit [cdc.gov/hpv](https://www.cdc.gov/hpv).

The UAMS Northwest Regional Campus includes 356 medical, pharmacy, nursing and health professions students, 76 medical and pharmacy residents, and two sports medicine fellows. The campus has 13 clinics including internal and family medicine, a student-led clinic, orthopaedics and sports medicine, behavioral health/psychiatry, geriatrics, genetics counseling, transplant follow-up, and physical, occupational and speech therapy. Faculty conduct research to reduce health disparities.

UAMS is the state's only health sciences university, with colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Health Professions and Public Health; a graduate school; a hospital; a main campus in Little Rock; a Northwest Arkansas regional campus in Fayetteville; a statewide network of regional campuses; and seven institutes: the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute, Jackson T. Stephens Spine & Neurosciences Institute, Harvey & Bernice Jones Eye Institute, Psychiatric Research Institute, Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging, Translational Research Institute and Institute for Digital Health & Innovation. UAMS includes UAMS Health, a statewide health system that encompasses all of UAMS' clinical enterprise. UAMS is the only adult Level 1 trauma center in the state. UAMS has 3,275 students, 890 medical residents and fellows, and five dental residents. It is the state's largest public employer with more than 12,000 employees, including 1,200 physicians who provide care to patients at UAMS, its regional campuses, Arkansas Children's, the VA Medical Center and Baptist Health. Visit [www.uams.edu](http://www.uams.edu) or [www.uamshealth.com](http://www.uamshealth.com). Find us on [Facebook](#), [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

Like us, we're social:    