

# Gendered Sexual Health Beliefs' influence on Black College Men's HPV Vaccine uptake decision making

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In 2009, the CDC approved the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine for men. This vaccine has been identified as a safe and effective approach to preventing HPV-related illnesses, including anal cancer, penile cancer, throat cancers and genital warts (CDC, 2015). However, preliminary studies indicate that young men are not as willing as young women to be vaccinated despite the fact that between 65% and 93% of college men have HPV (Elbasha & Dasbach, 2010). This study identifies the ways in which gendered sexual health beliefs influence Black college men's human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine decision making processes. A total of 16 Black college men in the southeastern United States were interviewed about their HPV vaccine knowledge, and HPV vaccine information seeking behaviors. Survey and interview results indicated that HPV and HPV vaccine knowledge among these men was low. Overall, participants did not view HPV infection or vaccination as an immediate concern as they saw it as a virus that primarily affected women. Further, beliefs that men do not seek sexual health advice or go to doctors regularly were cited as reasons Black men may not be willing to get vaccinated. Despite these issues, most men were willing to consider getting the HPV vaccine after having had the chance to seek further information online. These findings pointed to gaps in our understandings of Black college men's HPV vaccination beliefs and provided insight into the importance of integrating this population's unique beliefs into sexual health education efforts.