



**BlueCross BlueShield
of Alabama**

An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association



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MEDIA RELEASE

**Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama Supports UAB's Call for Action to
Protect Alabama Children from HPV-Related Cancers**

Birmingham, AL – Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama fully supports UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center's joint call for action urging parents to vaccinate their children against the Human Papillomavirus (HPV).

This call for action is also supported by the Alabama Department of Public Health, the University of South Alabama Mitchell Cancer Institute, the American Cancer Society, Alabama Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Alabama Academy of Family Physicians.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) about 27,000 men and women are diagnosed with HPV-related cancers every year in the United States. These cancers could be prevented with a safe and effective vaccine.

The CDC recommends boys and girls receive three doses of HPV vaccine beginning at ages 11 or 12. The HPV vaccine series can be started as early as 9 years of age and should be completed before the age of 13. The HPV vaccine is more effective the earlier it is given, but is still recommended to young men up to the age of 21 and young women up to the age of 26.

According to a 2015 CDC report, only 40 percent of girls and 21 percent of boys in the U.S. received the recommended three doses of the HPV vaccine. Alabama ranks among the 10 states with lowest HPV vaccination rates in the nation.

Blue Cross is urging healthcare providers to recommend HPV vaccination to all of their eligible patients and discuss its benefits with their patients and colleagues.

HPV-related cancers are the only cancers that can be prevented through vaccination. For more information, go to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at www.cdc.gov/HPV/.

About Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama has insured Alabamians for 80 years. Blue Cross offers coverage plans to corporations, individuals and the senior market. For more information about Blue Cross, visit AlabamaBlue.com.

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About the UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center

The UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center is among the 45 cancer centers in the nation to meet the stringent criteria for the National Cancer Institute's comprehensive designation. The center is a leader in groundbreaking research, in reducing cancer disparities and in leading-edge patient care.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The University of Alabama at Birmingham is a separate, independent institution from the University of Alabama, which is located in Tuscaloosa. Please use **University of Alabama at Birmingham** on first reference and **UAB** on all subsequent references.