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# HPV VACCINE

Vaccines are one of the most significant public health achievements of all time. Prior to the availability of vaccines, diseases such as polio and many others were common childhood illnesses that impacted the lives of millions. Those of us who work in public health and medicine are acutely aware of the impact vaccines have had on our children's health and the critical role they continue to play in society.

In 2006, we were dealt a game-changer. A vaccine became available that allows parents to protect their children against a disease that causes more than half a dozen different types of cancers including cervical, head, neck, anal, penile, vaginal and vulvar. This disease—human papillomavirus; or HPV, currently affects 79 million Americans and causes 27,000 new cases of cancer in the U.S. each year. Suddenly, we became the generation that could reduce or end HPV-related cancers. And yet, sadly, many parents are declining this life-changing vaccine. Coverage rates for HPV vaccination are dismally low compared to other vaccines recommended at the same age, in large part due to a lack of parental understanding about the disease and the vaccine.

As HPV is a sexually transmitted infection, it may seem unnecessary to vaccinate your adolescent. Some parents fear that vaccinating adolescents is akin to giving them permission to engage in sexual activity. Some parents believe that the vaccine is not needed if their child remains abstinent until marriage. Many parents are simply unaware of the long-term implications of HPV infection and that it can lead to precancerous and cancerous lesions in the head, neck and genital regions. Other parents believe the unfounded rumors that the vaccine is harmful, ineffective or too new to ensure that it is safe. All of these fears and myths are based on inaccurate information and only serve to rob parents of the opportunity to give their children a life free from a cancer-causing virus. At the end of the day, this vaccine is much more than a means to prevent a sexually transmitted infection. Simply put, this vaccine prevents cancer.

We created this book to show the real impact of HPV-related diseases. The individuals portrayed herein have courageously shared their stories, and we are honored to pass them on to you in the hopes that they will serve as a reminder of the importance of HPV vaccination. We are on the brink of history, and we've been given the chance to change not only the lives of our children but those of generations to come.

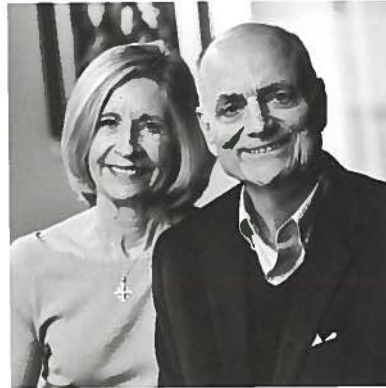
# MICHAEL TERRY

In November 2012, Michael Terry, a healthy 65-year-old male, discovered a lump in his throat. Over the next year, he underwent three biopsies and two endoscopies before being diagnosed with throat cancer caused by HPV. By that time, the cancer had metastasized into his lymph nodes.

Michael began treatment at MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, TX, where he underwent eight weeks of chemotherapy followed by three months of both radiation and chemotherapy. The radiation caused severe skin peeling and open sores on his face. He was unable to swallow and had to have a feeding tube for more than two months. He lost nearly 50 pounds, suffered from relentless insomnia and headaches, and lost most of his sense of taste and smell.

Sadly, Michael was only in remission for two months before his cancer returned. He had neck surgery in August 2014 where a tumor was removed from his throat and his neck was rebuilt using a portion of his chest muscle. He underwent another six weeks of chemotherapy and radiation. Finally, in March 2015,

Michael was again placed in clinical remission. Today, he has a loss of feeling in his fingers and toes and continued loss of function in his salivary glands, thyroid and swallowing abilities. He also has permanent lung damage leaving him at increased risk for pulmonary complications. Going forward, Michael will undergo check-ups every three to six months for the next six years.



Michael and his wife, Joan, have learned a lot about HPV and its long-term effects. “HPV is so common that most people will encounter it at some point in their life, yet there is very little awareness of it. I had no idea HPV caused so many kinds of cancer in both women and men.”

As the son of Dr. Luther Terry, the renowned former surgeon general who published the 1964 landmark report on tobacco and health, Michael has a deep-seated appreciation for preventive health measures, including vaccines. “I have this disease because the vaccine wasn’t available for me. But it is available now, and it is essential that everyone be vaccinated. It’s a vaccine that prevents cancer. It’s as simple as that.”

# CALLIE DI FRANCESCO

Callie diFrancesco was a 22-year-old college student when she received her first Pap smear. Callie expected the procedure to be routine; however, sadly, it was not. Callie's Pap smear was abnormal and resulted in a biopsy. The biopsy revealed that the bright young college student had cervical dysplasia caused by HPV. HPV is the most common sexually transmitted infection in the United States, affecting nearly 80 million men and women. It causes genital warts, cervical cancer and several other types of cancer.

Following her diagnosis, Callie underwent her first surgery, a Loop Electrosurgical Excision Procedure (LEEP), to remove abnormal cervical tissue. For the next year, she received Pap smears every three to six months to monitor her cervical tissue. Unfortunately, one year later, Callie had another abnormal Pap which resulted in a second LEEP procedure. Following her second surgery, Callie continued to receive Pap smears every three to six months until finally, in the fall of 2013, she was deemed healthy and told to return in a year for her next Pap.



Callie says HPV created a significant amount of emotional stress and anxiety in her life. In the midst of dealing with this, she met her husband, Blake. They both worry about what the future holds, whether Callie will remain healthy, and if HPV will affect their plans to start a family.

In an unfortunate ironic twist, when Callie was 18 years old, she had the opportunity to receive the HPV vaccine and declined it. She looks back at that decision saying, "I made a completely uninformed decision about something that was life-changing." She urges young men, women and parents not to make the same mistake.

"HPV vaccination is cancer prevention – period. Why not take the opportunity to prevent disease, heartache and possibly death in your child's future?"

The HPV vaccine is recommended for adolescent males and females at 11-12 years of age. The vaccine is safe, effective and provides lasting protection against most cancers caused by HPV infection.