

UQ Communications
Ph: 61 7 3365 3367
Fax: 61 7 3365 1488
E-mail: communications@uq.edu.au

MEDIA RELEASE

Aussie of the Year wins approval for cervical cancer vaccine

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The world's first cervical cancer vaccine has been approved in the United States and could be on the shelves in Australia by the end of the year.

It will be a lifesaver for many women as cervical cancer kills about 270,000 women worldwide each year.

Technology developed by Australian of the Year [Professor Ian Frazer](#) and his team from The University of Queensland helped create the preventative vaccine.

America's Food and Drug Administration has licensed the vaccine, Gardasil, for use in girls and women ages nine to 26.

The vaccine protects against four of the dozens of strains of the human papillomavirus (HPV), which causes genital warts as well as cervical cancer.

US drugmaker Merck & Co. expects to start selling a three-shot series of Gardasil by the end of the month for about \$485.

Merck is seeking similar approval around the world including Australia, and approval in Australia is expected by next month.

"It is extremely exciting after 15 years to see the product finally reach the point where it will come to market," Professor Frazer said.

"More gratifying still is the fact that women across the world will benefit significantly from this vaccine."

HPV causes abnormal cells or tissue growth on the feet, hands, vocal cords, mouth and genitals.

About 60 types of HPV have been identified so far with each strand infecting certain parts of the body.

MEDIA: Professor Frazer (07 3240 5315, international: + 61 7 3240 5315), Anton Sanker (0412 057 512, international: + 61 7 412 057 512) or Miguel Holland at UQ (07 3365 2619, international: + 61 7 3365 2619)