

[HONORS THESIS SAMPLE TITLE, SIGNATURE AND ABSTRACT PAGE]

A STUDY EXAMINING THE KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES, AND
BEHAVIORS OF COLLEGE-AGED WOMEN RELATED TO HPV
VACCINATION EXPERIENCE

BY

STUDENT NAME

An Honors Thesis Submitted to the Department of Public Health
and the Honors College [← Honors College students only]

Southern Connecticut State University
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This honors thesis was prepared under the direction of the candidate's thesis advisor, Dr. Sandra Bulmer, Department of Public Health and it has been approved by the members of the candidate's thesis committee. It was successfully defended and accepted by the University Honors Thesis Committee.

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ABSTRACT

Author: Student Name

Title: A STUDY EXAMINING THE KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES, AND BEHAVIORS OF COLLEGE-AGED WOMEN RELATED TO HPV VACCINATION EXPERIENCE

Thesis Advisor: Dr. Sandra Bulmer

Department: Department of Public Health and Honors College

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The human papillomavirus vaccine (Gardasil), introduced in 2006, is administered to women between the ages of 9-26 years. The vaccine is targeted toward young girls ages 11-13 years; however, college-aged women are also faced with the decision about whether or not to become vaccinated. This study examined the prevalence of HPV vaccination in a randomly selected sample of 373 college women between the ages of 18-26 years. Demographic variables, sexual behaviors, and Health Belief Model constructs including HPV knowledge, perceived susceptibility, perceived severity, and perceived benefits and barriers were examined based on vaccination status. Those who received the vaccine were significantly more likely to be white and of a younger age. In contrast to previous studies which had explored STI vaccination intentions, most Health Belief Model constructs were not associated with actual vaccination behavior in this population. Non-vaccinated women were significantly more likely to report a wide range of barriers including feeling uninformed about the HPV vaccine, and having concern about adverse side-effects. The fact that vaccinated women did not differ from non-vaccinated women with regard to HPV knowledge, perceived susceptibility and severity may reflect the information and types of marketing messages that are being delivered to these young women by physicians and pharmaceutical companies. Further research is needed to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the factors associated with actual HPV vaccination behavior in this population.

[Note: Maximum word limit for abstract = 300 words]