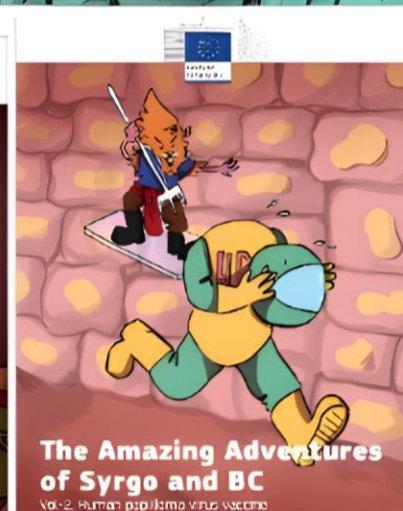




# From Ugly Ducklings to Swan Tales: Innovative Storytelling for Cervical Cancer Awareness Month





*"In the tapestry of awareness campaigns -including health literacy campaigns- comics are the '**Ugly Ducklings,**' often overlooked by health experts.*

*But much like that misunderstood duckling blossomed into a majestic swan, comics surpass traditional methods in crafting compelling tales for **cervical cancer awareness.**"*









# Complexity and Jargon







## Cultural barriers







**Insufficient Public  
Engagement and Science  
Communication**





**Educational  
System  
Constraints**



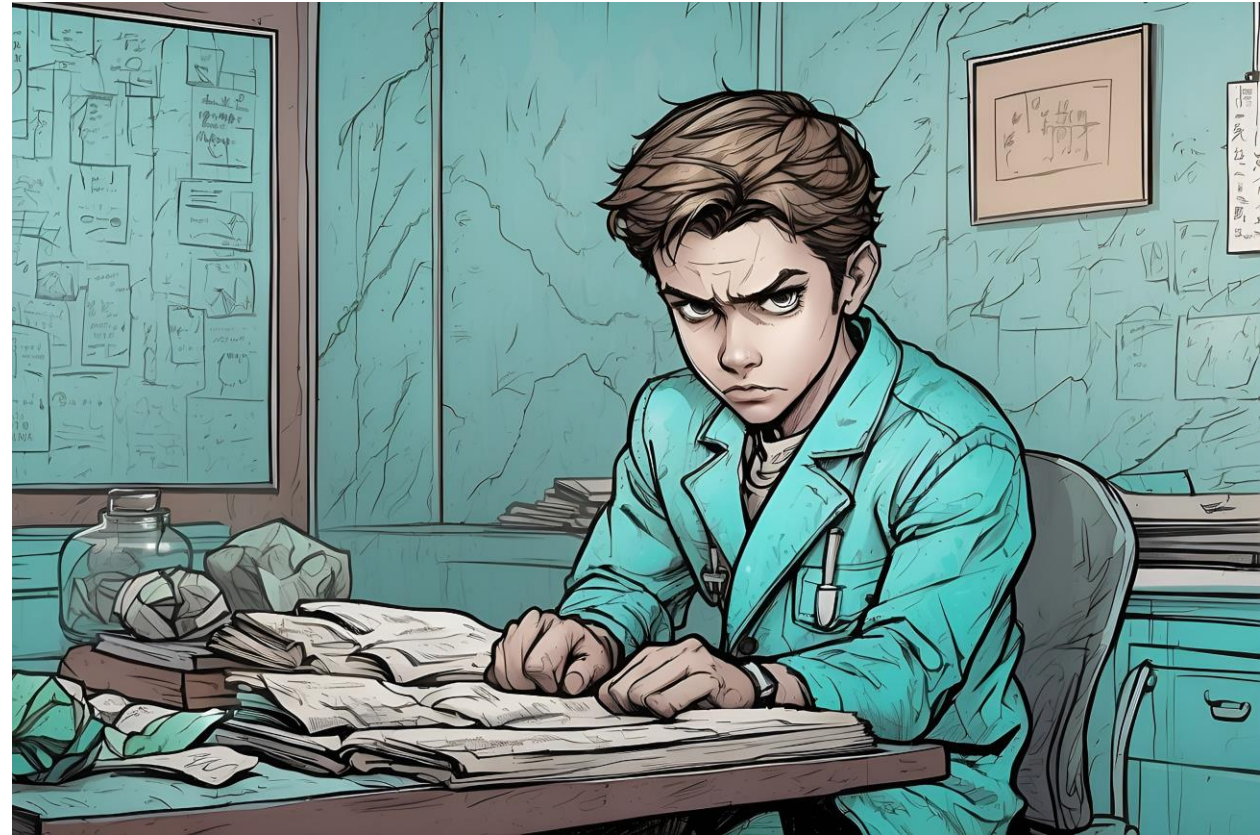


# Educational System Constraints

- Lack of student engagement
- Memorization-based learning
- Insufficient focus on fostering curiosity

## Solutions:

- \* Incorporate interactive methods
- \* Promote critical thinking
- \* Make **science** relevant and **interesting**





# Insufficient Public Engagement and Science Comm.

Data ▾ Analysis and guidance ▾ Training and tools ▾ About ECDC ▾



**Is the HPV vaccine safe?**

HPV is the most common sexually transmitted infection that may lead to cancer. There is however a safe and effective way to protect yourself from HPV - a vaccine.

[Read more >](#)



**HPV Factsheet**

Get the facts on HPV, its symptoms, how it spreads and how you can protect yourself and those around you.


[Read more >](#)



**HPV vaccine: don't get misguided - check the FACTS!**

Are you having second thoughts about getting the HPV vaccine?


[Read more >](#)




EUROPEAN MEDICINES AGENCY  
SCIENCE MEDICINES HEALTH


## EMA medical terms simplifier

Plain-language description of medical terms related to medicines use




An agency of the European Union 





World Health Organization

[Home](#) / [Newsroom](#) / [Fact sheets](#) / [Detail](#) / [Cervical cancer](#)



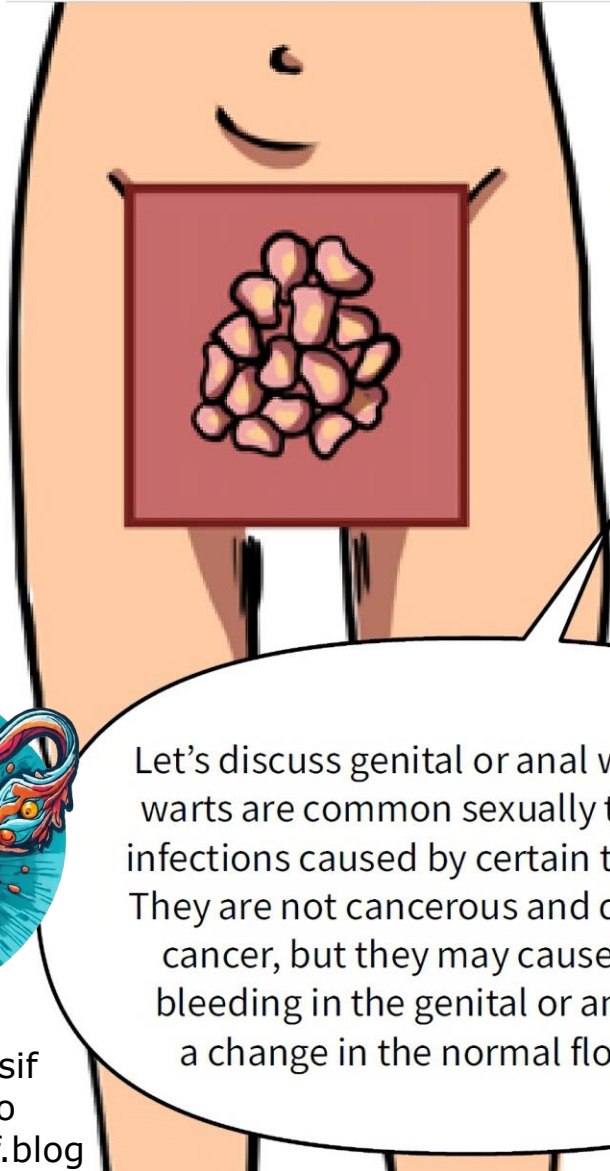
Credits +

**Cervical cancer**

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[Español](#)



# Cultural Sensitivity in Science



## YOU CAN GET WARTS EVEN IF YOU:

- don't have penetrative sex
- use condoms  
(a condom does not cover all genital skin).



## WAYS TO STOP HPV FROM SPREADING INCLUDE:

- The HPV vaccine. It protects against the types of HPV that cause most genital warts and cervical cancer, as well as some other cancers.
- Avoid having sex, or sharing sex toys, during treatment for genital warts



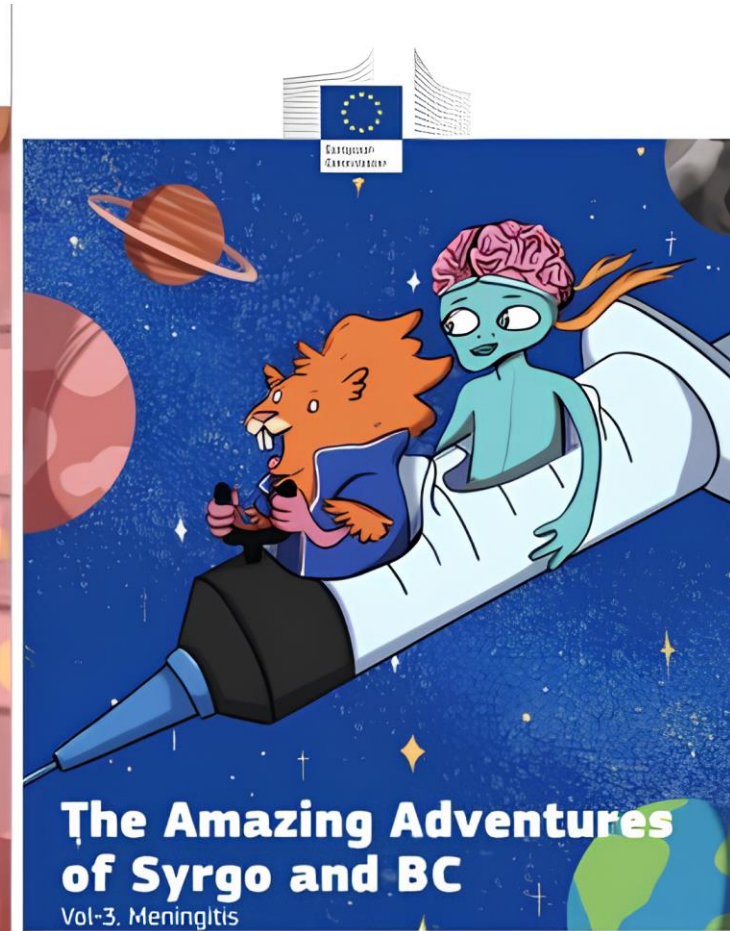
Let's discuss genital or anal warts. These warts are common sexually transmitted infections caused by certain types of HPV. They are not cancerous and do not cause cancer, but they may cause itching or bleeding in the genital or anal area, or a change in the normal flow of pee.

There is no cure for HPV. However, warts can be treated or removed. The treatments for genital warts can cause pain, discomfort, or scarring from surgery.



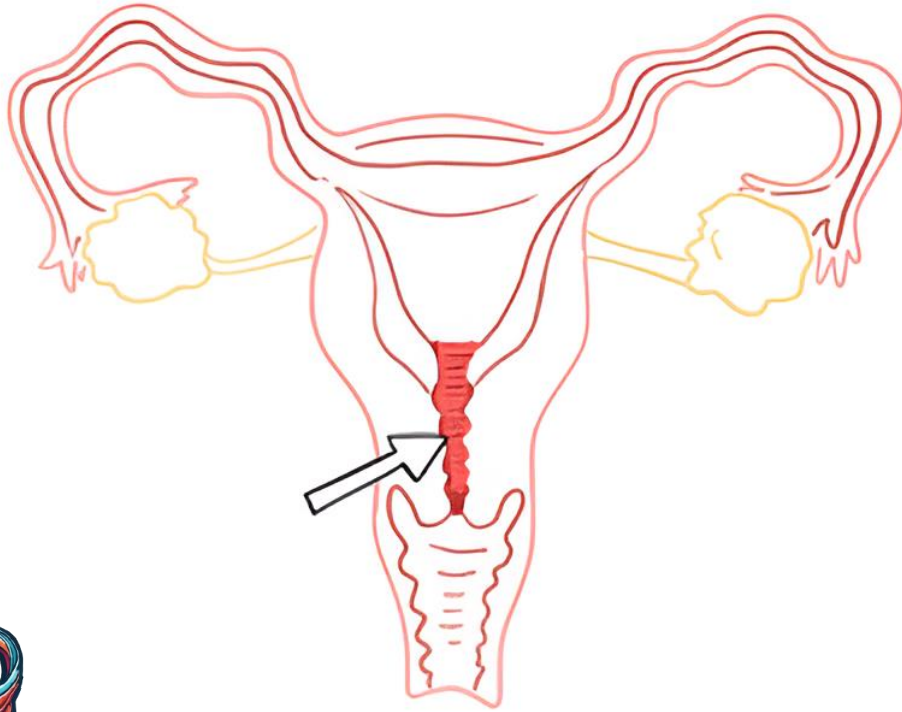


# Simplification and Clarity from now on. Goodbye, Complexity and Jargon!



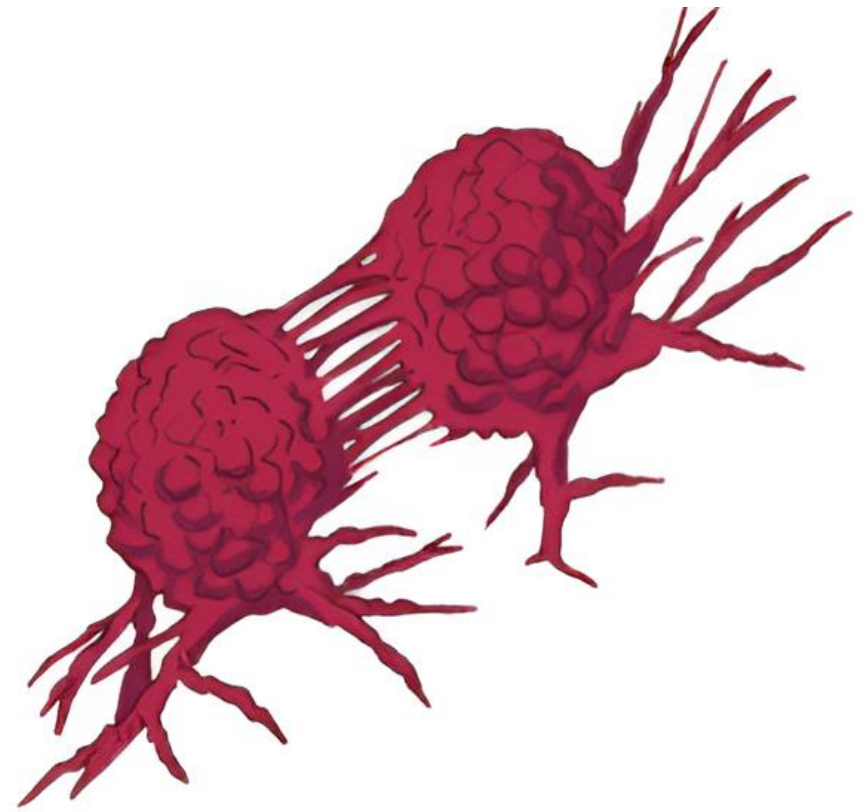


# Cervix / Cervical



**CERVIX**

- the neck of the uterus.



**CANCER**

- a large group of diseases that can start in almost any tissue or organ of the body when abnormal cells grow uncontrollably. It can go beyond its usual location and spread to other tissue and/or organs.





# SciComics: Elements, Challenges, Success

What are the **key elements** for a successful scicomics?

What challenges are

- Before
- During, and
- After making the books?





# Before

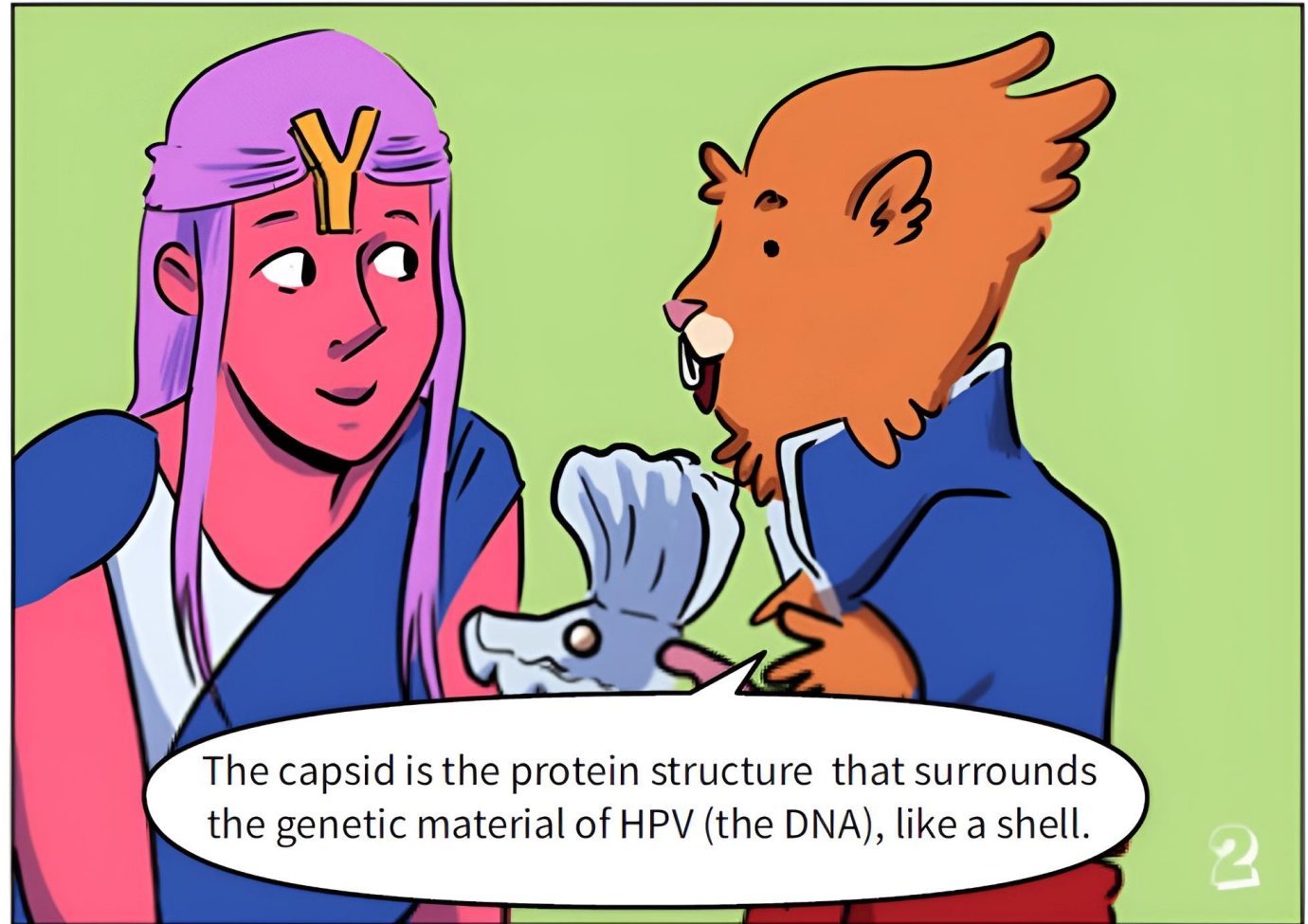
- **engaging** visuals,
- **accurate** information,
- a compelling narrative, and
- a **balance** between **entertainment** and **education**.





# During

- simplifying complex concepts,
- ensuring accuracy, and
- maintaining a captivating storyline



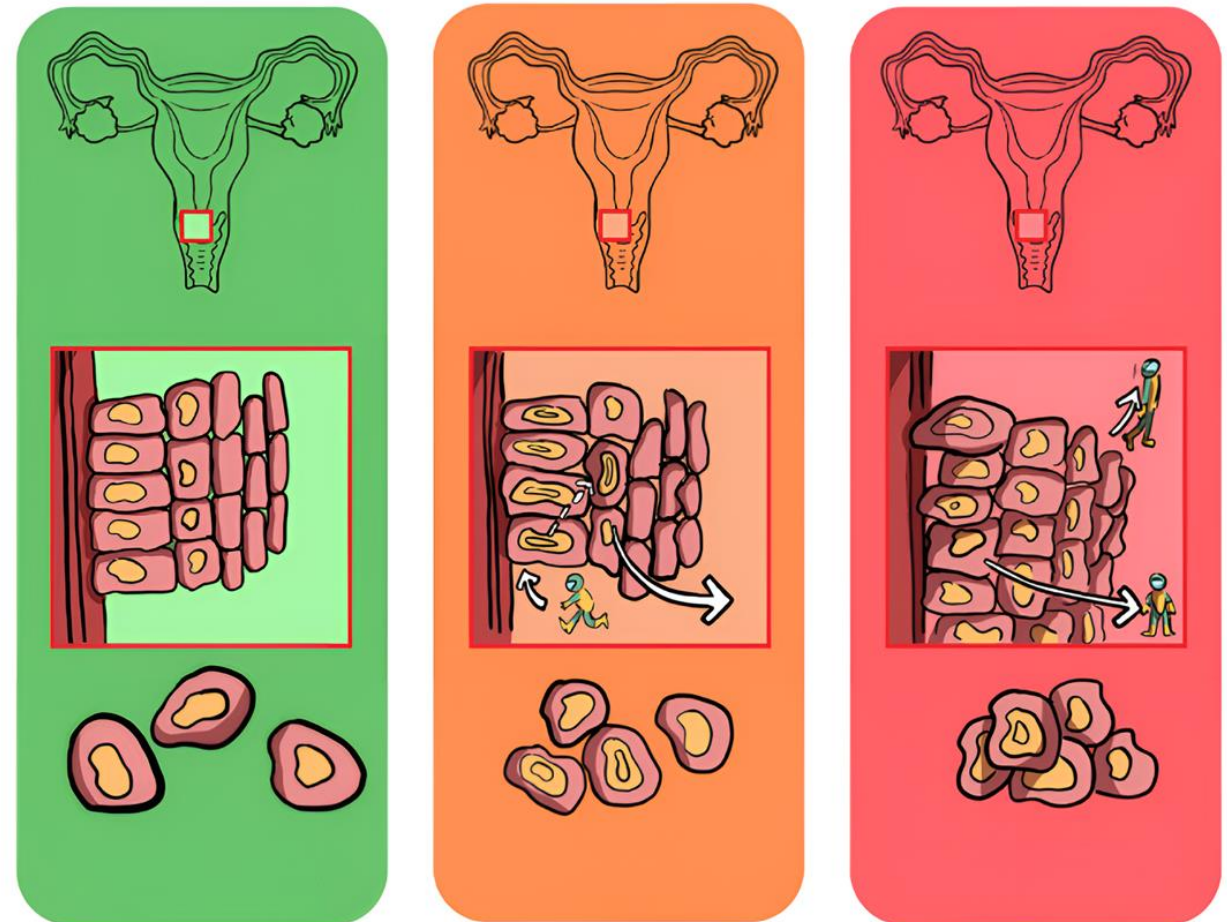


# The Amazing Adventures of Syrgo and BC

Vol-2. Human papilloma virus vaccine

## During

- simplifying complex concepts,
- ensuring accuracy, and
- maintaining a captivating storyline





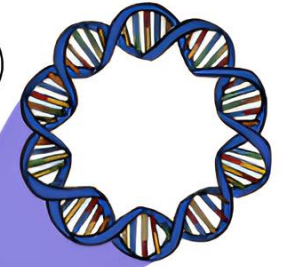
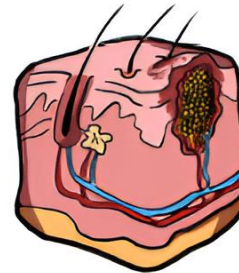
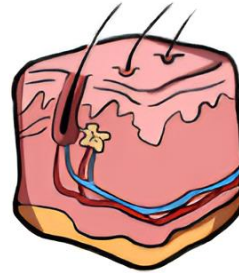
# During

- simplifying complex concepts,
- ensuring accuracy, and
- maintaining a captivating storyline



HPV has a round shape. Its diameter is 55 nm (1 nm = 0.0000001 cm). This is a million times smaller than a tennis ball! This means HPV, like most known viruses, cannot be seen under a light microscope! You need a powerful electron microscope.

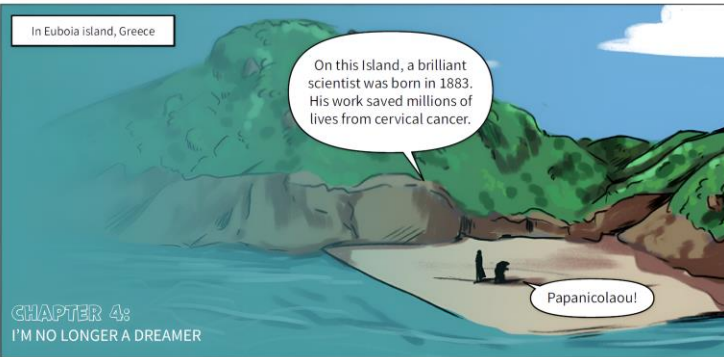
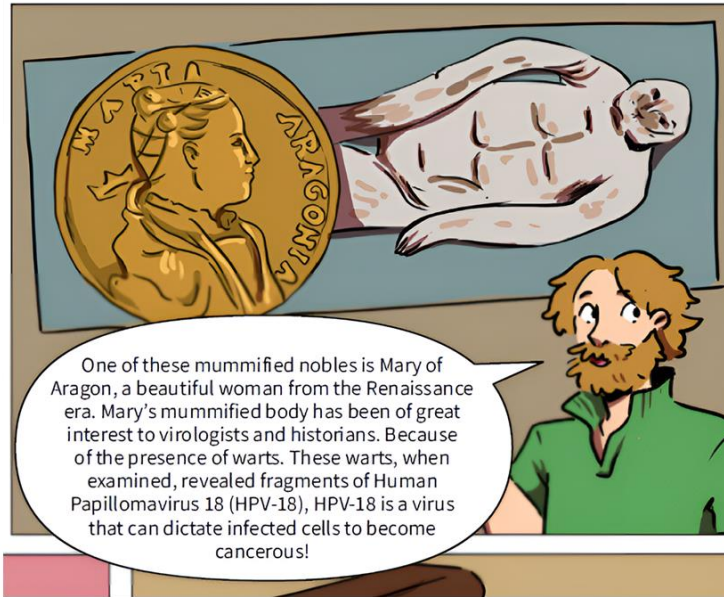
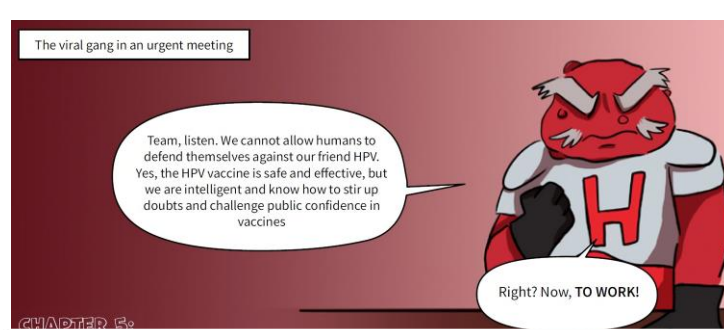
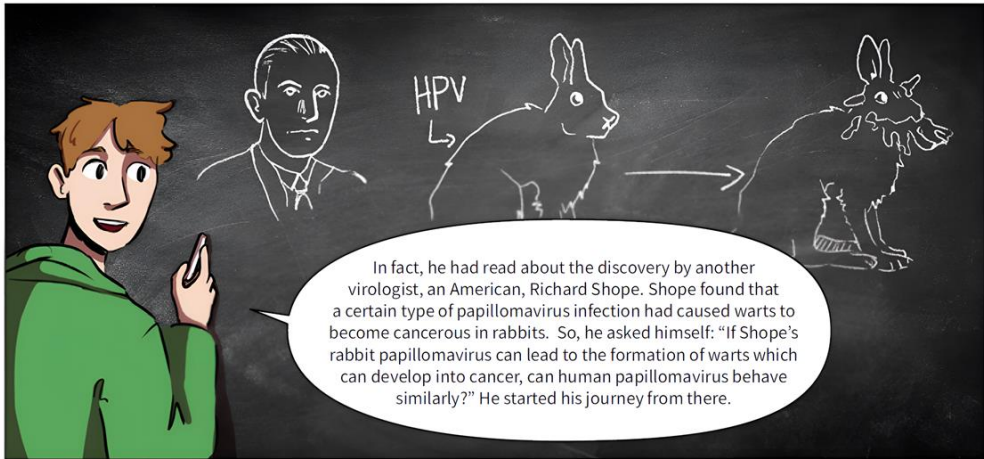
HPV is composed of proteins and genetic material (DNA). Some of the proteins that make up HPV assemble themselves into starry shield shapes (kind of like a star built from LEGO bricks). 72 starry shields combine to form the capsid, which encloses the viral DNA like a shell.



Each kind of HPV has a slightly different looking starry shield and therefore, has unique characteristics. Scientists have given each type of HPV a number to identify it.

Most HPV types, such as 6 and 11, can cause different types of warts (including genital warts, condylomas) and are considered low-risk HPV. However, some types of HPV, like 16 and 18, are very harmful to humans (high-risk HPV) and can cause cancers in various parts of the body, including the vulva, vagina, penis, or anus. These can also cause cancer in the back of the throat (called oropharyngeal cancer) and may even include the base of the tongue and tonsils.





## During

- simplifying complex concepts,
- ensuring accuracy, and
- maintaining a captivating storyline





# After

- Hurdles in promoting and reaching the target audience.
- Essential for staying current with scientific advancements post-release.



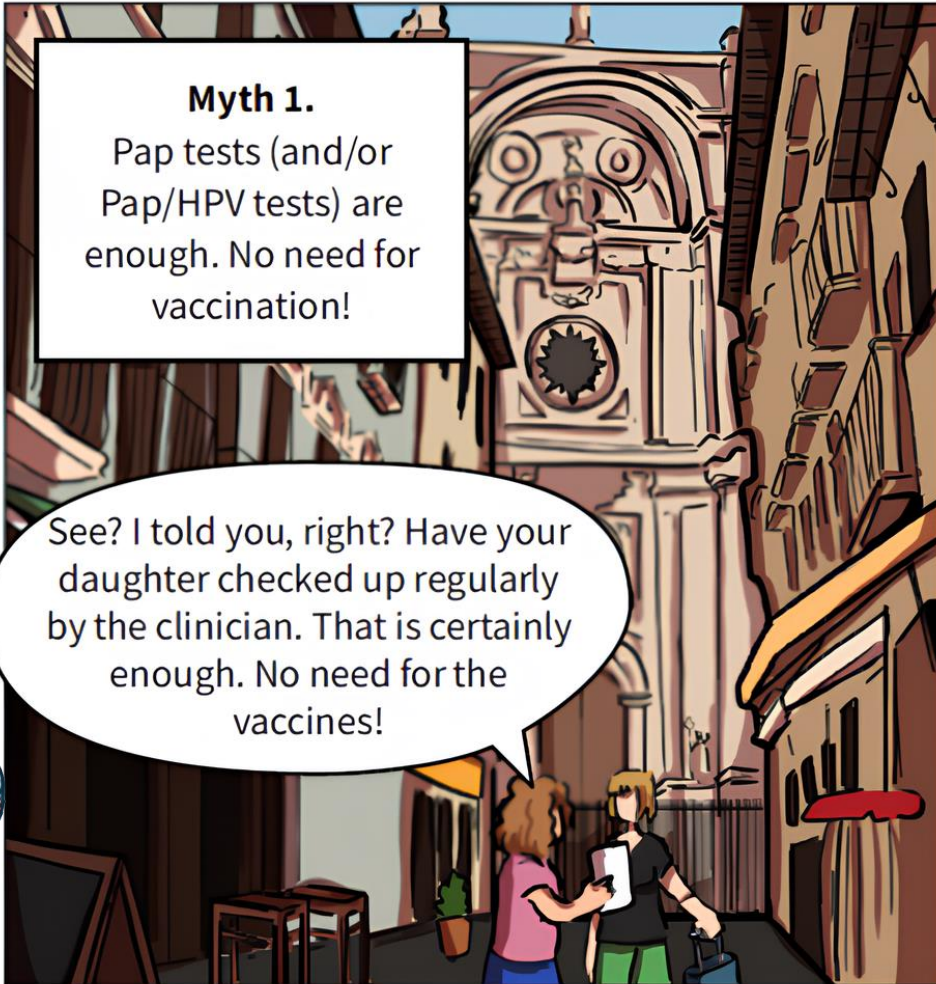


# Addressing Myths

## Myth 1.

Pap tests (and/or Pap/HPV tests) are enough. No need for vaccination!

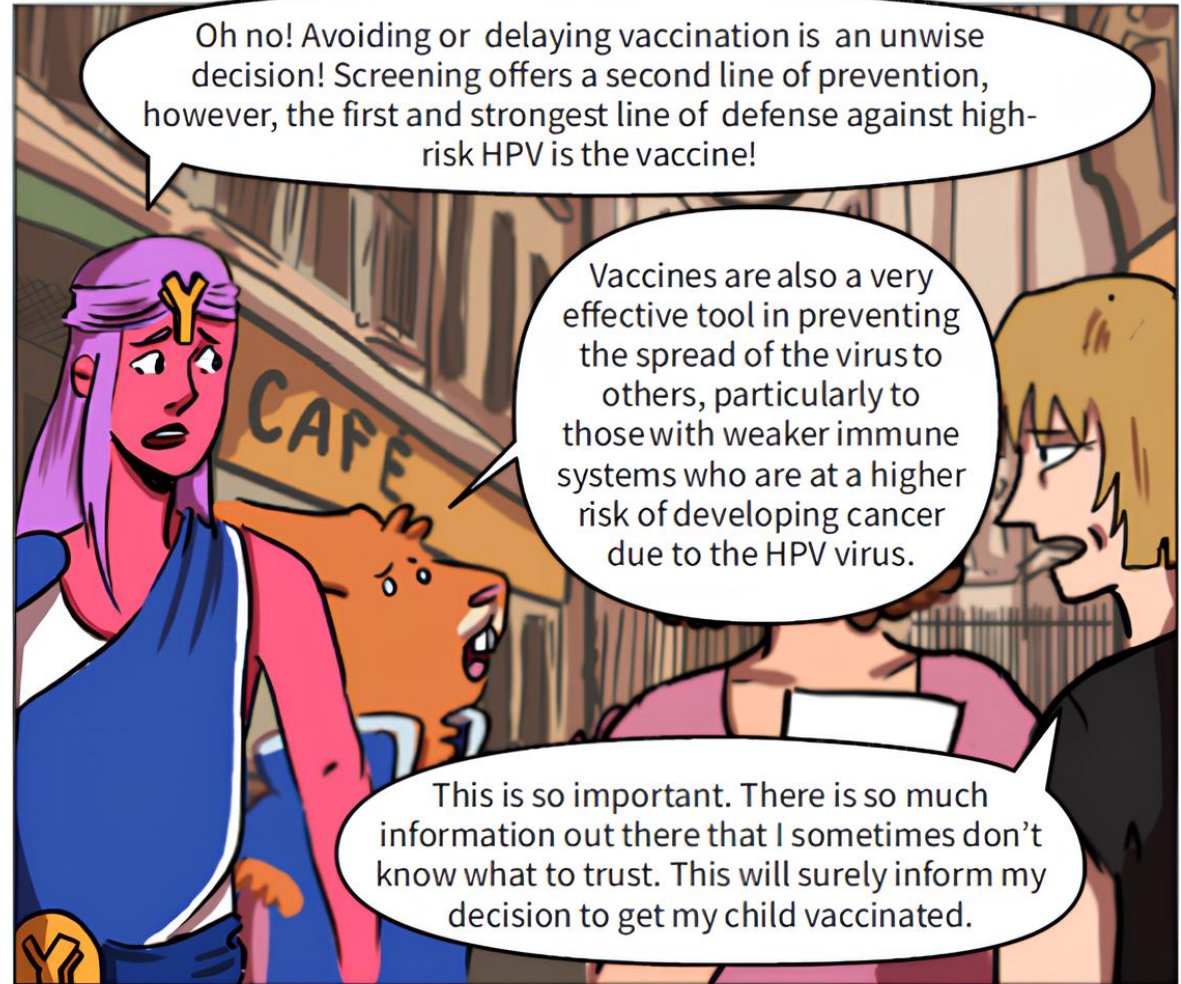
See? I told you, right? Have your daughter checked up regularly by the clinician. That is certainly enough. No need for the vaccines!



Oh no! Avoiding or delaying vaccination is an unwise decision! Screening offers a second line of prevention, however, the first and strongest line of defense against high-risk HPV is the vaccine!

Vaccines are also a very effective tool in preventing the spread of the virus to others, particularly to those with weaker immune systems who are at a higher risk of developing cancer due to the HPV virus.

This is so important. There is so much information out there that I sometimes don't know what to trust. This will surely inform my decision to get my child vaccinated.





# Addressing Myths



\* **Efficacy** - the ability, especially of a medicine or a method of achieving something, to produce the intended result





# Addressing Myths

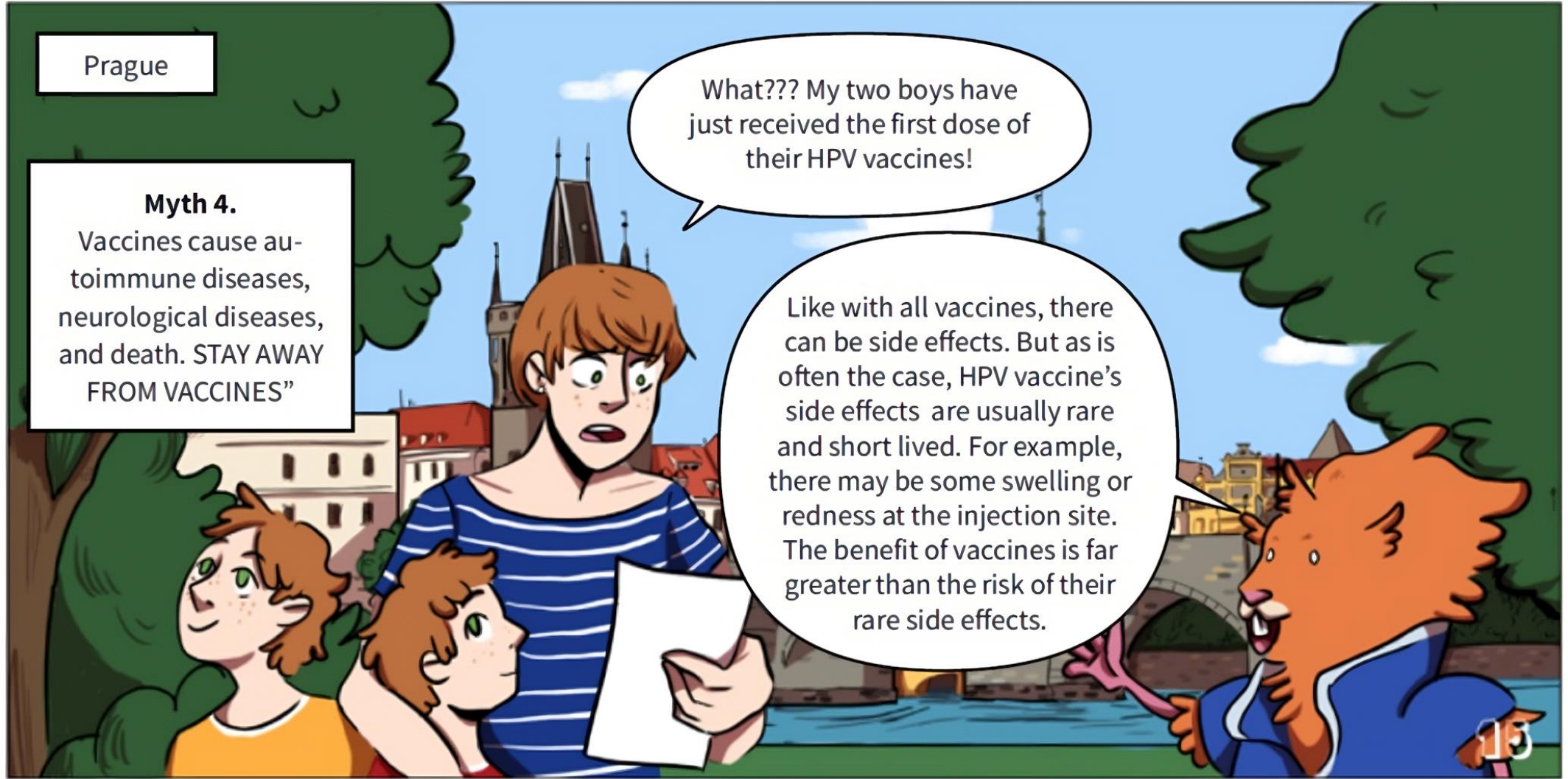
Prague

## Myth 4.

Vaccines cause autoimmune diseases, neurological diseases, and death. **STAY AWAY FROM VACCINES**"

What??? My two boys have just received the first dose of their HPV vaccines!

Like with all vaccines, there can be side effects. But as is often the case, HPV vaccine's side effects are usually rare and short lived. For example, there may be some swelling or redness at the injection site. The benefit of vaccines is far greater than the risk of their rare side effects.





# Measuring outcomes

- "Overall, the majority of students (15 yo) agreed that the comics were
- **interesting (72%), fun (60%),**
- **important (83%),** and amusing (52%).
- **Nearly 90%** said the comics were somewhat or **very easy to understand.**
  
- **About 20%** thought they were **boring**, and
- **about 10%** found them **confusing.**
  
- **A minority of students (7-16%) questioned the accuracy of the comics' health and science information.**
  
- **(89%)** indicated that they might or would recommend comics to a friend,
  
- **About 80%** of students indicated that they **would want to read more.**"\*





# Pros of Using Comics to Teach Science:

- 1. Visual Engagement:** Comics use visuals to convey information, making scientific concepts more engaging and accessible to visual learners.
- 2. Storytelling:** The narrative structure of comics can create a compelling storyline around scientific topics, enhancing understanding and retention.
- 3. Multimodal Learning:** Combining text and visuals supports multimodal learning, catering to different learning styles and reinforcing understanding.
- 4. Accessibility:** Comics can simplify complex scientific ideas, making them more accessible to a broader audience, including students with diverse learning abilities.
- 5. Memory Retention:** The combination of images and text in comics can aid memory retention, helping students remember and recall scientific information more effectively.





# Cons of Using Comics to Teach Science

- 1.Simplification:** While simplification can aid understanding, it may also lead to oversimplification, potentially misrepresenting complex scientific concepts.
- 2.Limited Detail:** Comics may not provide the depth of detail found in traditional science textbooks, potentially leaving out crucial information.
- 3.Perceived Lack of Rigor:** Some educators and students may perceive comics as less rigorous or academic compared to traditional instructional materials.
- 4.Time Constraints:** Integrating comics into science education may require additional time for both teachers and students, potentially impacting the coverage of the curriculum.
- 5.Resource Availability:** Access to quality educational comics may be limited, and creating or obtaining suitable materials can be a challenge for educators.





# Collaboration Opportunities

- potential collaboration between public health experts and comic creators.
- cross-disciplinary efforts for impactful outcomes.



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# Conclusion \*<sub>key points</sub>



Comics utilize visuals to make scientific concepts engaging and accessible for visual learners.



The narrative structure of comics enhances understanding and retention of scientific topics through compelling storylines.



Comics simplify complex scientific ideas, ensuring accessibility for a diverse audience, including students with different learning abilities.



Comics may **not** interest everyone and should complement other communication channels,



We need to examine how the comics influenced youth understanding and interest in the vaccines, virology, and infectious disease.





Feel welcome to  
throw a question!





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**European Commission**

Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety

Unit B3 – Health monitoring and cooperation, Health networks

Luxembourg

[@EU\\_Health](#) [#EUHPP](#)

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