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BECAUSE LIFE SHOULD BE SWEET

### *Not as I would wish it to be*

As many students head back to school with the accompanying doctor's visits, controversy around Gardasil still rages. Gardasil is the vaccine approved to protect against the two types of human papillomavirus, or HPV, responsible for 70 percent of cervical cancer. Sounds good, yet not everybody thinks so.

In Canada, the debate centers on the effectiveness of the vaccine and whether it is the best use of public money in a strapped public medical system. Several provinces will offer it to girls in a select age group. Others are considering it.

In the US, the debate is quieter. It has moved into private households and on campuses. Insurance coverage for the pricey \$360 vaccine is uneven among insurance companies and university health plans. Provisions for the uninsured are even sketchier, with some states funding it and other states going without. There are also those who are adamantly anti-vaccine in general, or simply distrustful of a new vaccine in light of recent drug recalls.

Last week, a survey by Ovarian Cancer Canada showed that a third of women surveyed thought that the HPV vaccine would protect them from ovarian cancer.

I have no reason to doubt the accuracy of the survey results. A new flurry of media debate followed this announcement. Many expressed concern that Gardasil would give young women a false sense of security against serious diseases such as ovarian cancer. Therefore, the argument goes they would neglect necessary screening tests.



Dawn Del Russo

### *Shop Online like a Stylist*

Shopping online is quick and easy, but it can also be confusing and disappointing.

How can you tell if an item is good quality or if it will wear well? Dawn Del Russo is an online fashion stylist and owner of her own online boutique [www.belladawn.com](http://www.belladawn.com). She gives DolceDolce readers her tips for foolproof online shopping. She also dishes on the top holiday trends and her quick fashion fixes.

**DD:** When shopping online how you can tell the quality of garments if you aren't familiar with the line? Is there a check list of things to look for?

**DDR:** The best way to tell the quality of a garment is to first look at what it is made of. Stay away from any synthetic materials such as: acetate, acrylic, polyester, and rayon. These types of synthetic fabrics usually don't last long and have a cheap look to them. I would also see where the garment is made. Most quality clothing is made in Europe or the USA. I am not discounting other countries but just to stay on the safe side when shopping online. Also knowing who the designer is and their background can be helpful as some designers are known for high quality items. The cost of a garment is a large factor. As much as one wants to go for

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Beauty

### **Beauty Bargain**

*Olay's Definity Eye Illuminator* is the best, well-priced eye product we have found. It plumps, reflects light, diminishes fine lines, and helps to fade hyper-pigmentation and banish under-eye dullness. The under-eye area is a prime-spot for hyper pigmentation. A well-priced product, that works. How fabulous is that?

### *Oh Baby!*

We don't usually do Mommy items, but this was so great we just had to share. So if you are expecting, or you are a friend, sister, or grandmother of a mother-to-be, this is for you. Finally two smart women have designed the perfect thing to wear while giving birth. They realized that some women like to have a little dignity and even feel a little pretty when delivering. Whoever came up with the idea that everyone is fine with being stark naked in any situation, even medical, should be shot! Now there is Binsi. It's pretty, practical and they say even the nurses don't curse it.

[www.birthinbinsi.com](http://www.birthinbinsi.com)



The world is as it is, not as we would like it to be

.Photograph by: [www.karinpacione.com](http://www.karinpacione.com)

This is where they lose me. One thing does not follow the other. I would argue that at any time, in spite of our best efforts, there is a group of individuals who remains woefully ignorant. Just look at recent surveys on any number of subjects. The number of young Americans who can't find the US or Iraq on a map is shocking. I can assure you the situation is not much better in Canada, although Canadians do seem to know more about Canada, which is laudable.

And this is the problem in debating the pros and cons of Gardasil and issues like it. There is a tremendous amount of misinformation about health issues, even among well-informed individuals.

A lot has been written about the risks of HPV. Many experts have stated that most women will clear the infection harmlessly. I personally know of too many cases where that has not happened. I like the idea of stopping a viral strain that causes 70 percent of all cervical cancers - especially a virus that is so contagious it can be spread even through skin-to-skin sexual contact. In addition to the dangers posed by cervical cancers, according to a new report in [www.medical-news.net](http://www.medical-news.net) September 18, 2007, doctors have linked HPV to head and neck cancers. The report, quotes Dr. Dell Yarborough, an oncologist at the Ingram-Vanderbilt Surgical Centre, as stating that 10 to 15 percent of tumors forming the oral cavity test positive for HPV. According to the report Gardasil would also protect against this type of cancer. The report goes on to state -

those great "cheap" prices, they can sometimes can signal poor quality.

Another way to protect yourself when shopping online is to look for the stores' return policy. It is important that they give enough time for shipping - 30 days is usually best. Many companies pride themselves on customer service and will take almost anything back with tags and a receipt. As boutique owners, we feel it is our duty to keep the customer happy. As long as you can return the item, you can see for yourself if you like the quality when you receive it. Finally, don't be afraid to ask questions. I receive tons of e-mails daily about the quality of the items we sell. Most online shops have someone you can contact via e-mail or phone to answer your questions. Here is a checklist to keep in mind: What is the fabric type? Who is the designer of the product? Where has the item been made? What is the cost of the merchandise? Does the website have a return policy and what are the terms? Look for a questions and concerns E-mail address or phone number on any online shopping site.



[www.belladawn.com](http://www.belladawn.com)

**DD:** What do you consider three top trends for this holiday season?

**DDR:** This holiday season has so many great items, but I would say the top three are: an oversized gold cuff bracelet emblazoned with gemstones in bright royal colors, such as emerald green, purples, and blues. Second, every girl needs at least 1 trapeze style dress in their closet, try a 3/4 length or cap sleeve dress in crepe jersey or silk with a jeweled collar that falls right above the knee paired this with opaque tights and conservative high heeled



### *I'm Seeing Red!*

This fall you don't want to be without the perfect shade of red lipstick. It's an instant update. It's drop-dead glamour and sex- appeal. It also says, move over boys, I mean business.

### *Reds we love:*

**Chanel Rouge Hydra** base: **New York Red** is a clear fiery **Red**, **Shanghai Red** is deep and rich, and **Red Dream** is slightly plummy and irredesident.

**Fire and Ice** and **Cherries in the Snow** by Revlon have been classics for over 50 years. They have discontinued them, but fans won't have it, and they had to bring them back. Maybe one of these long-wearing creamy classics is you!

If you fret over smearing, **L'Oreal Paris Infallible Lipcolour** in cerise is for you. It doesn't budge and is clear, classic red.

Still on the fence about red? Feeling a little bit timid? Then try Laura Mercier's Lip Stain in Scarlet. It's sheer, you can build the intensity you want, and the shade works with most skin tones.



Photograph by: [www.karinpacione.com](http://www.karinpacione.com)

according to the US Centers for Disease Control - that head and neck cancer is on the rise among younger people in their twenties. So much for a harmless virus.

As for the vaccine giving young women a false sense of security against disease, can anything give one more of false sense of security than youth itself? We have lived through herpes and AIDS for more than 30 years, and some people still choose to have high-risk sex. Surveys show that even doctors have a fair rate of unprotected and therefore high-risk sex. Obviously, education is not the only answer.

As I read journalists and advocates arguing the merits of pap smears over Gardasil, I keep wondering why it is an either-or situation. It really is not that hard to get a pap smear; GPs do them, insurance companies pay for them, and free clinics provide them. The problem is you can't always get women to go. Nobody likes it. Smart women do it anyway.

But darlings, the world is as it is, not as we would like it to be. Deadly infections spread in hospitals because we can't just get medical professionals to wash their hands enough. This is a documented fact. The mind boggles. We live in an information age. Even toddlers play with computers, yet many people can't read a map. A vaccine that prevents cervical cancer makes good sense to me because, while we can try to educate young women to be safe we can never be sure they are all paying attention.

As the old saying goes, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. But as always darlings, make up your own mind.

oxfords in patent leather or suede.

Finally, a staple this season is a cropped jacket in leather, satin or wool. These pieces will take you straight through the holiday season with style and class!

**DD:** What tips do you have for an instant wardrobe update this season?

**DDR:** A fabulous way to update your wardrobe instantly is with a new pair of shoes. They can make any basic white T-shirt and jeans look fresh and new, instantly. So many designers are showing Mary Jane heels and high heeled ankle boots. Look for vibrant coloured red or navy Mary Jane platform heels. If you decide to purchase trendy lace-up ankle booties, look for some in natural leather tones. Look for a heel height that works for you. I suggest at least a 2 1/2 inch heel to accentuate the calf. This height is usually comfortable for most. It won't make a shorter heel; woman look stocky and it will keep tall ladies from looking very tall. One quick and minimal investment to update last year's wardrobe is a quick trip to the tailor. It may take a little creativity, but it works wonders. Transform an old A-line shirt into a new high waist pencil skirt. Have the skirt fitted to your waist instead of hips and have the hem tapered in or change your long sleeve boring white button down into a new trendy a 3/4 sleeve blouse.

**DD:** What are there any accessory combinations that work perfectly to update a day to evening look?

**DDR:** I love accessories that transform an outfit from day to night. Think about a long gold thin chain necklace like the Moon and Stars Necklace with petite charm details, at [www.Belladawn.com](http://www.Belladawn.com). I like to wear this necklace long during the day for a more subtle look, then at night I loop it around my neck a few times to give a chunkier fun feel. Our leather wrap chain necklace bracelet is a perfect transition piece. Worn as a long necklace during the day, it can be wrapped around your wrist at night to really make your look pop! It is important to look for accessories that are versatile, and have a dual purpose. Even a simple sash belt can be tied on your hips during the day and then moved up to your head as a fun headband at night to sweep away drab, flat day hair.

**DD:** Can you describe the perfect

Food

### *Italian, Indian Style and I like it!*

Grilled Italian Panini are all the rage and the perfect thing to go with last week's spicy tomato soup. Too often when you buy a panini the result is disappointing; soggy fillings, soggy bread, and tasteless fillings are all too often the norm. A freshly-made panini is crisp and the filling is fresh and tempting.

Any type of bread can be used, but I find a fresh ciabatta or crusty sour dough is perfect. Lately I have been using something a bit usual - plain store bought nan. Store-bought nan does not come close to the fluffy, buttery, delightful item served at good Indian restaurants, but properly heated they are very good. I keep a stock in the freezer. You can find them in lots of markets these days and always in an Indian shop. Heated and grilled in a panini, a plain nan is perfect. It's crisp on the outside and warm and chewy inside. Try it and you'll see how well it works.

To make a good panini, assemble your cheeses and thinly-sliced meats. Ham, Parma ham, chicken, salami, and sopressata are all good choices. Sliced fontina, assiago, mozzarella, and Swiss also work well. Fresh greens such as arugula and basil add something special to the mix.

Grilled vegetables such as eggplant and zucchini, combined with tomatoes can be used for a wonderful vegetarian version or combined with other ingredients. Remember to season everything.

Panini are never over-stuffed. Make thin layers of three or more ingredients. It is traditional to grill panini. There are special panini grills. Breville makes an excellent version. But I often use an ordinary grill pan lightly coated with olive oil or a non-stick frying pan. When I use a frying pan, I like to place a little dried or fresh rosemary in the pan to flavour the bread. Sometimes I add a few chili flakes.

When you grill the sandwich, be careful not to scorch it. A few minutes on med-high heat does it. If you using an open grill or frying pan, use a small plate to apply pressure to the top the sandwich as you grill. When made properly, the cheese will just melt and the greens will

business casual look. Does it differ from coast to coast?

**DDR:** Business casual is a look I receive many questions about. I have even had workshops on it. I suggest keeping your look simple, with a buttoned down, ruffled blouse with 3/4 puff sleeves, or French cuffs layered with a cashmere V-neck sweater, and worn with a wide leg wool pant in either navy or black. Pair this look with an oversized leather handbag in a bold colour to create a subtle but polished look. Dark denim works well in a wide leg or trousers fit as well, but keep in mind it must be a dark wash. Anything else looks dated and inappropriate for work. Pull your whole look together with a patent leather ballet flat with embellishment on the toe, or a pointy toe heel to peek out just a bit.

**DD:** What is a good alternative to jeans and sweats for casual wear this fall?

**DDR:** A wonderful alternative for jeans is a pair of cords. They usually have a similar fit and come in some amazing colors such as deep navies and warm tans. Also many designers are giving fleece a more structured look with pockets and cuffs. As for an alternative to your comfy sweats, the best advice is to look for items made of modal cotton. This ultra soft cotton is so comfy and forgiving, designer Saint Grace makes great modal cotton wide leg pants in both a cropped style and full length.

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be still be fresh.

The first official week of fall and already the weather is changing. We have already had had a few brisk days. It's great time of year to stroll with friends and make the most of sidewalk cafes and sunny afternoons. I think the debate about Gardasil is important; it will affect our young people's future. Perhaps more than some people realize. My practical New England soul still believes that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

I wish you all a wonderful sunny, autumn week. I hope you'll go out and make hay while the sun shines. Isn't that a sweet notion. Until next week, please [sign-up](#) if you haven't already, DolceDolce is free, and [forward](#) us on to your friends. Because life should be sweet.

Gracey Hitchcock  
Editor



[www.yanka.ca](http://www.yanka.ca)

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