

Who Should Get Screened for Cervical Cancer and How Often?

All women between the ages of 21 to 65, including those who have had the HPV vaccine, need cervical cancer screening.

- Women ages 21 to 29 years should have a Pap test every three years.
- Women ages 30 to 65 years can choose a Pap test every three years, a HR HPV test every five years, or a Pap test and HR HPV test every five years.

Women older than 65 or women who have had their cervix removed should talk with their health care provider to decide what is best for them.

What are the Symptoms of Cervical Cancer?

Cervical cancer may not cause any symptoms at first. This is why regular screening is so important.

Some symptoms of cervical cancer can include:

- Heavy vaginal bleeding or discharge (more than usual)
- Bleeding after sex, between periods, or after a pelvic exam
- Pain during sex or urination

If you have any of these symptoms, talk to your health care provider.

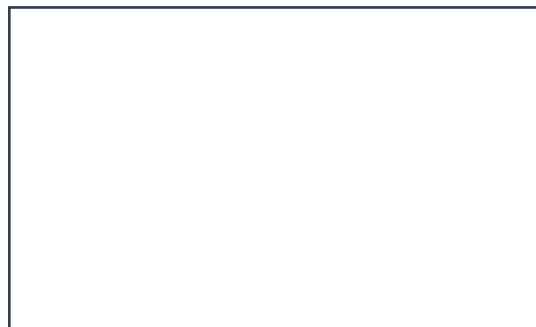
Did You Know...

- The HPV vaccine can prevent most cervical cancers and some other cancers.
- Using condoms during sex and not smoking can lower cervical cancer risk.
- Women should always follow-up with a health care provider if their cervical cancer screening results are not normal.

Not Insured?

The New York State Department of Health Cancer Services Program offers free cervical cancer screening for eligible, uninsured New York residents. Call **1-866-442-CANCER (2262)** to find a program near you.

To get information about enrolling in a health plan through the New York State of Health call the help line at **855.355.5777** or visit: nystateofhealth.ny.gov.



Department
of Health

Get the Facts about Cervical Cancer



Cervical cancer can be prevented.

Regular screening can help prevent cervical cancer or find it early, when treatment may work best.

Women ages 21 to 65 should talk to their health care provider about cervical cancer screening.



Cancer Services
Program

What is Cervical Cancer?

Cervical cancer is cancer that starts in a woman's cervix. The cervix is the opening of the uterus. It connects the uterus to the vagina.

Cervical cancer usually starts with changes to the cells on the cervix. If found early, these cells can be removed to prevent cancer.



What Causes Cervical Cancer?

Most cervical cancers are caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV). HPV is a common sexually transmitted infection. Both men and women can get HPV and the cancers caused by HPV, such as cancer of the cervix, vagina, penis, anus, and throat.

The HPV vaccine can prevent HPV. The HPV vaccine is recommended for girls and boys between the ages of 9 and 14, and young adults through age 26.

What are the Risks for Cervical Cancer?

- **Having HPV.** HPV causes nearly all cases of cervical cancer.
- **Not getting screened.** Cervical cancer is most often found in women who have never been screened.
- **Smoking.** Women who smoke are about two times more likely to get cervical cancer than non-smokers.
- **Age.** Women over the age of 30 are more likely to get cervical cancer.



The chance of getting cervical cancer may also be increased by:

- Having been treated for cervical cancer or dysplasia (precancerous cells)
- Using birth control pills for five years or longer
- Giving birth three or more times
- Having many sexual partners
- Having HIV or another condition that makes it hard for your body to fight off infections
- Having a mother who took DES (diethylstilbestrol) while pregnant with you



How Can I Get Screened for Cervical Cancer?

Screening means checking for signs of cancer before there are symptoms or problems.

There are two screening tests that can help prevent cervical cancer or find it early:

Pap Test (or Pap Smear)

A Pap (Papanicolaou) test looks for changes in cells that are removed from the cervix.

High Risk (HR) HPV Test

The HR HPV test looks for the types of HPV that cause most cervical cancers. This test is usually done at the same time as the Pap test.

Follow up with your provider if your screening results are not normal.

