

## My Action Plan

- I will talk to my doctor about my cervical health.
- I will talk to my doctor about getting a Pap and/or HPV test.
- I will talk with my doctor about getting the HPV vaccine (women up to age 26).
- If I have sex, I will use a condom to lower my chance of an HPV infection.

## What can I do to protect myself and my children from Cervical Cancer?

- Know that most cases of cervical cancer are caused by HPV infection, which is spread through sex.
- Using a latex condom every time you have sex may lower your chance of getting or spreading HPV but this is not a guarantee. HPV can affect skin areas not covered by a condom.
- Birth control pills will not protect you from HPV.
- Limit the number of people you have sex with. The more sexual partners you have, the greater your risk of getting HPV.
- If you have children (girls or boys), protect them by getting them the HPV vaccine between ages 11-12. They should have 2 shots 6 months apart.



## Where can I get more information?

**For an appointment call**  
1-888-369-2427 (888-FOX-CHASE)  
or visit [www.foxchase.org](http://www.foxchase.org)

**Philip E. and Naomi P. Lippincott  
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# Cervical Cancer



## Know the Facts...



TEMPLE HEALTH

## Am I at risk for Cervical Cancer?

There is no way to know for sure if you are going to get cervical cancer. Certain things raise your chances of getting it. These are called risk factors.

The main risk factor for cervical cancer is infection with the human papillomavirus or HPV. Other factors, together with having HPV, can raise your risk.

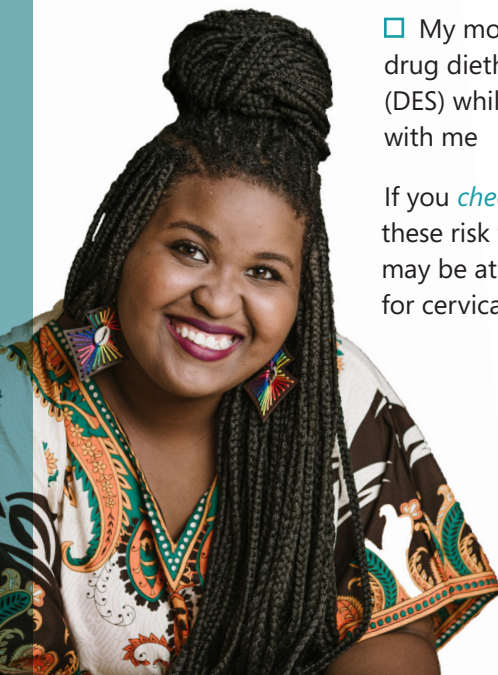
Check your risk factors for cervical cancer below:

- I have a high-risk type of Human Papillomavirus (HPV)
- I have HPV and:
  - I have had 7 or more full-term pregnancies
  - I have used birth control pills for 5 or more years
  - I smoke

Other risk factors not linked to HPV:

- I have a weakened immune system
- My mother took the drug diethylstilbestrol (DES) while pregnant with me

If you *checked any* of these risk factors, you may be at increased risk for cervical cancer.



## What are the symptoms of Cervical Cancer?

Early cervical cancers often don't cause symptoms. But as the cancer grows, women may notice:

- Bleeding from the vagina:
  - Between regular periods
  - After sex, douching, or a pelvic exam
  - After menopause
- Periods that last longer and are heavier than before
- More than a normal amount of discharge from the vagina
- Pelvic pain
- Pain during sex

## When should I be screened?

If you are:

### 21-29 years old

Have a Pap test every 3 years

### 30-65 years (3 options)

- Have a Pap test every 3 years
- Have a Pap test and HPV test (co-testing) every 5 years or
- Have an HPV test every 5 years

### Older than 65 years

Talk with your doctor to learn if you still need screening

### Women who have had a hysterectomy

Women who have had their cervix removed and do not have a history of HPV, pre-cancerous cell changes, or cervical cancer do not need to continue getting Pap tests. All others should talk about screening with their doctor.

## What are the screening tests for Cervical Cancer?

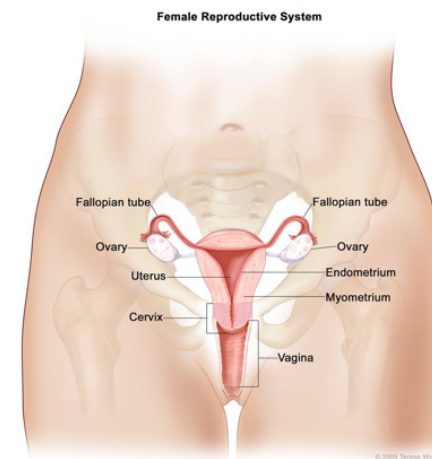
The Pap test and the HPV test are used to find pre-cancerous cell changes before they turn into cervical cancer.

### Pap Test

During a Pap test, cells are collected from the surface of the cervix and vagina. A brush, broom, or a small plastic stick is used to gently scrape cells from the cervix and vagina. The cells are viewed under a microscope to find out if they are normal.

### HPV Test

There are many types of HPV. About 15 strains are considered "high-risk" for causing cancer. Types 16 and 18 are the most strongly linked to cervical, anal, and head & neck cancers. Women ages 30 and older can ask for an HPV test, while having their Pap test. This is called co-testing which is less likely to miss any changes of the cervix.



Anatomy of the female reproductive system