



## Cervical cancer: **A fight we can win**

Decades ago, cervical cancer was a leading cause of cancer deaths among women in the United States. The common screening methods (Pap test) along with the introduction of the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine changed that. Today, it's a preventable type of cancer and is highly treatable when found early.

### **Know your risks & get tested**

Cervical cancer is most often found in women over age 30, and is usually caused by an HPV infection. Other risk factors for cervical cancer include smoking, the use of birth control pills for five years or greater, giving birth three or more times, and having more than one sexual partner. Most cases of cervical cancer occur in women under the age of 50 years.

### **THE HPV VACCINE**

The HPV vaccine protects against forms of HPV that cause cancer of the cervix, vagina and vulva:

- The vaccine is recommended for boys and girls aged 11 to 12. (It can be given to persons age 9 to 26)
- The vaccine consists of a series of two or three shots, depending on the person's age
- Women who receive the HPV vaccine still need to have regular Pap tests

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## WOMEN'S PREVENTIVE SERVICES

*U.S. health care reform guarantees basic health services for women are covered 100 percent by your medical plan.*

*That means you pay nothing out-of-pocket if you see an in-network provider for things like cervical cancer screening, Pap smears and HPV testing (beginning at age 30, and then every three years).*



### PAP TEST

- The Pap test can detect abnormal cells before they have a chance to turn into cancer. It can also find cervical cancer early, when it is still very curable.
- The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends cervical cancer screening every three years for women age 21 until age 65 OR screening every five years for women age 30 to 65, if using the combined screening (Pap and HPV).

### HPV TEST

- The human papillomavirus test looks for the presence of the virus that is known to be the cause of cervical cancer
- Like a Pap test, an HPV test uses a sample of cells collected from the cervix. It may be done at the same time as your Pap test, or as a follow-up if your Pap results showed abnormal cervical cells
- If the HPV test results are positive for the high-risk types of HPV, your doctor may recommend additional testing



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