

CERVICAL CANCER SCREENING

WHAT IS A PAP SMEAR?

A pap smear takes a sample of cells from cervix and looks for changes in cells related to cancer.

WHAT IS A HPV TEST?

The HPV test looks for the virus (human papillomavirus) that causes the cell changes associated with cervical cancer.

WHY GET TESTED?

Cervical cancer used to be the leading cause of cancer deaths among women in America, but the advancement of screening, including the pap smear and HPV tests, have significantly decreased cervical cancer deaths.

21 - 29 YEAR OLD TESTING GUIDELINES

- A pap smear should be done by a physician at the age of 21
- If the pap smear results are normal, the test should be repeated every 3 years

30 - 65 YEAR OLD TESTING GUIDELINES

- Three Options:
- Pap smear every 3 years
 - HPV every 5 years
 - Pap smear and HPV co-test every 5 years

65+ YEAR OLD TESTING GUIDELINES

No testing is recommended if prior tests have been normal and the patient does not have high risk for cervical cancer.

High risk patients include those with a family history of cervical cancer, have HIV, had three or more child births, or had long term oral contraceptive use.

If you do not have health insurance or you have low income, visit the following website to see if you qualify for free screening through the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program.

<https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/nbccedp/screenings.htm>

Sources:

- <https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/recommendation/cervical-cancer-screening>
- https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/cervical/basic_info/screening.htm

