Cervical Cancer Screening

Commitment to Inclusion
At Swedish, our priority is to provide safe, compassionate, and high-quality care to every patient, regardless of gender identity, gender expression, and/or sexual orientation.
Cervical cancer has typically been associated as a service for cisgender women. We are working to change this perception as cervical cancer can affect transgender men, non-binary people, and other gender diverse individuals. With direct input from the LGBTQIA+ community, we are making our provider and caregiver education more inclusive. We are committed to ensuring everyone under our care feels welcomed and respected.

What is cervical cancer?
• Cervical cancer is the growth of abnormal tissue starting in the cervix.
• Human papillomavirus (HPV) is the main cause of cervical cancer. HPV is a virus that travels from one person to another during sexual or intimate contact.

A simple screening could save your life
If you are between the ages of 21 to 65 and have a cervix, speak with your health care provider about cervical cancer screening. Screening can help detect:
• HPV and changes in your cervical cells before cancer develops
• Early, more treatable stages of cancer

Make an appointment with your primary care provider or OB/GYN today and ask if cervical cancer screening is right for you*. 

What You Should Know about Cervical Cancer Screening

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Screening recommendations</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Younger than 21</td>
<td>No screening recommended</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age 21-29</td>
<td>Pap test every 3 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age 30-65</td>
<td>1. Pap test every 5 years, and 2. HPV co-test every 5 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Over age 65</td>
<td>Screening tests may not be needed if you’ve had normal tests for the past 10 years. Talk with you provider.</td>
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• Yearly pelvic exams or pap smears are no longer recommended.
• You should be screened regardless of your sexual activity or HPV vaccine status.
• This is a routine preventative screening.
• You have the right to ask as many questions as you want about this procedure (before, during, and after).
• You have the right to:
  - Know, understand, and consent to any actions your provider is taking
  - Request to see a provider of your preferred gender
• Bring a support person along with you to your appointment.

*Speak with your health care provider if this screening schedule is right for you. Screening guidelines updated periodically.
More information on Pap Screening tests

• A speculum is used to see the cervix.

• A soft broom is used to collect a small sample of cells from your cervix to send to the lab. The test will determine if you need further evaluation.

• Some cells collected from your cervix during the Pap test will be examined for HPV. (When both samples are collected at the same time, it is called “co-testing.”)

Cervical Cancer Screening: Benefits & Risks

<table>
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<tr>
<th>BENEFITS</th>
<th>RISKS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prevents cancer from developing</td>
<td>Can be uncomfortable or painful</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discovers cancer early when it is easiest to treat</td>
<td>Abnormal results will require further testing with a procedure called a colposcopy</td>
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What you should know about HPV

• HPV is a very common virus.

• Most people with a cervix and have HPV never develop cancer. It usually goes away on its own.

• Your health care provider may recommend more frequent screenings to make sure the virus does not develop into cancer.

• HPV can adversely impact people living with HIV+ and those with immunocompromised conditions.

Facts about the HPV vaccine

• The HPV vaccine lowers your risk of getting HPV.

• The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the vaccine regardless of whether someone is sexually active or not.

• Everyone is recommended to get the vaccine series starting at age 11 or 12 and are eligible until they are 26 years old.

• For information about getting an HPV vaccine for yourself or your child, talk with your primary care provider.

Additional Resources

OBGYN and Primary Care Resources

• Swedish OB/GYN: https://www.swedish.org/services/womens-health

• Swedish Primary Care: https://www.swedish.org/services/primary-care

LGBTQIA+ Care at Swedish

• LGBTQIA+ Care at Swedish | Seattle, WA | Swedish Medical Center Seattle and Issaquah

• Swedish Transgender Health | Swedish Medical Center Seattle and Issaquah

• Contact us to schedule with one of our gender-affirming providers who have experience providing care to LGBTQIA+ patients
  - Transgender health line at 1-866-366-0926
  - Email address: transhealthnav@swedish.org

Mental Health Resources

• Trans Lifeline: https://translifeline.org/ (877) 565-8860

• The Trevor Project Crisis Line (for LGBTQ+ people, ages 13-24): 866-488-7386

• It Gets Better Project: https://itgetsbetter.org/

• The Affirmative Collective (Seattle): https://tacseattle.org/

• Valley Cities (Behavioral Health Care): https://www.valleycities.org/

• Sound Health: https://www.sound.health/

Financial Assistance

• Breast, Cervical and Colon Health Program (BCCHP) through the state of Washington offers free cancer screenings to eligible participants.