



## Advice for women ages 21 to 65

# Cervical Cancer Screening

### What is cervical cancer?

Cervical cancer is cancer that starts in the cervix (part of a woman's reproductive organs). HPV, or human papillomavirus, is the main cause of cervical cancer. HPV is a virus that travels from one person to another during sexual contact.

### A simple screening could save your life

If you are a woman between the ages of 21 and 65, talk with your health care provider about getting a cervical cancer screening done with a Pap test. This screening can detect changes in the cells of the cervix before cancer develops. It can also find cancer early — when it's easiest to treat.

Make an appointment with your primary care provider or OB-GYN today. Ask if a screening is right for you.

If you don't have a Swedish primary care provider, call us. We'll help with a referral.

### Recommended screening schedule\*

**(for women with a history of normal Pap results)**

Age	Screening
Younger than 21 years old	No screening recommended
21 – 29 years old	Pap test every 3 years
30 – 65 years old	1) Pap test every 5 years, and 2) HPV co-test every 5 years
Over 65 years	Screening may not be needed if you've had normal test results for the past 10 years. Talk with your provider.

\* Based on current guidelines from the United States Preventive Services Task Force, updated periodically

### Screening tests

#### Pap test

A small sample of cells from your cervix will be sent to the lab for testing. The test will look for changes in cells that could turn into cancer if left untreated.

#### HPV test

Some cells collected during the Pap test will be examined for HPV. (When both samples are collected at the same time, it is called "co-testing.") The test will look for the virus that causes cell changes on the cervix and may lead to cancer.

### Facts about cervical screening

- You should be screened regardless of whether you are sexually active or have received the HPV vaccine.
- Women used to be advised to get yearly pelvic exams or Pap tests. Studies now show the risks of frequent screening outweigh the benefits. Yearly pelvic exams are no longer recommended.

### The benefits of cervical screening

- Screening can find changes in cervical cells early — before cancer develops. Treating them early can prevent them from developing into cancer.
- Cancer is easiest to treat when it is found early.
- Almost all insurance plans cover cervical cancer screening as preventive care.

### The risks of cervical screening

- Screening may detect problems that would clear on their own without treatment.
- Some patients find the Pap test procedure uncomfortable.
- Additional procedures that result from the screening can carry more health risks and could be an additional cost.

(over)

## What you should know about HPV

HPV is a very common virus. In the U.S., 1 in 4 women is estimated to have HPV.

Most women with HPV never develop cancer. It usually goes away on its own. If you have HPV, your health care provider may recommend more frequent screenings to make sure the virus does not develop into cancer.

### **Lower your risk with an 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:

- All boys and girls should get the vaccine series starting at age 11 or 12.
- Women can get the vaccine until they are 26 years old.
- Men can get the vaccine until they are 21 years old.

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

If you don't have a Swedish primary care provider, call us. We'll help with a referral.

**1-800-SWEDISH (793-3474)**

Swedish Health Services and its affiliates do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability in their health programs and activities.

ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 888-311-9127 (Swedish Edmonds 888-311-9178) (TTY: 711).

注意：如果您講中文，我們可以給您提供免費中文翻譯服務，請致電 888-311-9127 (Swedish Edmonds 888-311-9178) (TTY: 711)



Swedish.org