

Screening for Cervical Cancer

What is Cervical Cancer Screening?



The cervix is the lower, narrow end of the uterus that forms a canal between the uterus (womb) and vagina. **Cervical screening checks the health of the cervix.** The Cervical Cancer Screening test is performed by your Gynecologist to **test for any abnormal cells** (precancer) from your cervix that if not treated appropriately could become cervical cancer. It is called a **PAP Test** or sometimes a **PAP Smear**. The Doctor may also check for the presence of **HPV (Human Papillomavirus)** which is the leading cause of Cervical Cancer.

Who Should Be Screened?



Females should start getting a Pap Test completed **once they turn 21**. How often you need to do this if your first test is normal will be decided by your doctor. **Females between 30-65 should speak to their doctor** about the need for a PAP Test and HPV (Human Papillomavirus) to decide what is best for you. If you are **over 65** you may no longer need to be tested. Speak to your doctor about if they recommend a PAP test or HPV Test for you.

What are Risk Factors for Cervical Cancer?



Almost all cervical cancers are caused by human papillomavirus (HPV), a common virus that **can be passed from one person to another during sex**. There are many types of HPV. Some HPV types can cause changes on a woman's cervix that can lead to cervical cancer over time, while other types can cause genital or skin warts. Other things that can **increase your risk** of cervical cancer are:

- 1** Having HIV (the virus that causes AIDS) or another condition that makes it hard for your body to fight off health problems.
- 2** Using birth control pills for a long time (five or more years).
- 3** Having given birth to three or more children.
- 4** Having several sexual partners.
- 5** Smoking.

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What Signs and Symptoms Do I Look Out For?



Early on, cervical cancer may not cause signs or symptoms. Advanced cervical cancer may cause bleeding or discharge from the vagina that is not normal for you, such as bleeding after sex. If you have any of these signs, see your doctor. They may be caused by something other than cancer, but the only way to know is to see your doctor and have a pelvic exam.

What Can I Do?



You many **help lower your risk** for cervical cancer by **not smoking, using condoms** during sex and by **limiting your number of sexual partners** and **getting tested as recommended by your doctor**. There are **two tests** that can help to prevent cervical Cancer or detect it early.

1 The Pap test (or Pap smear) which looks at any changes that may become cancerous.

2 The HPV test looks for the virus (human papillomavirus), this virus can cause Cancer if not treated.



Speak to your Doctor about the **HPV Vaccine**. Typically this is for females under the age of 26, but if you are under 45 years old and have never had this vaccine **ask your Doctor if it is right for you.**

PHP Care Complete FIDA-IDD (Medicare - Medicaid Plan)

The State of New York has created a Participant Ombudsman Program called the Independent Consumer Advocacy Network (ICAN) to provide participants free, confidential assistance on any services offered by Partners Health Plan. ICAN may be reached toll-free at 1-844-614-8800 (TTY users call 711, then follow the prompts to dial 844-614-8800) or online at icannys.org.

Partners Health Plan is a managed care plan that contracts with Medicare and the New York State Department of Health (Medicaid) to provide benefits to Participants through the Fully Integrated Duals Advantage for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (FIDA-IDD) Demonstration.