



Protect Yourself from Cervical Cancer: *Know the Facts*

CANCER CAN GROW ON YOUR CERVIX— THE SAME WAY IT CAN GROW ON OTHER BODY PARTS. MOST OF THE TIME, CERVICAL CANCER GROWS SLOWLY. IT CAN TAKE 10 TO 15 YEARS (OR MORE) FOR ABNORMAL CELLS TO TURN INTO CANCER.

What Causes Cervical Cancer?

- A virus, called human papillomavirus, also called HPV— can cause normal cells on your cervix to turn abnormal.
- HPV can lay dormant (sleep) for many years, until it becomes cancer.
- HPV is passed on through genital or skin-to-skin contact, most often during vaginal or anal sex.
- You cannot see or feel HPV or these cell changes on your cervix.
- All women who ever had sex are at risk for cervical cancer.

Cervical Cancer Screening Saves Lives

Cervical Cancer is nearly 100% preventable with regular screening tests, like the **Pap test** and the **HPV test**.

The **Pap test** looks for abnormal cells on the cervix that could turn into cancer over time. Women ages 21 to 29 should get a Pap test every 3 years.

The **HPV test** looks for the virus that can cause abnormal cells on the cervix. Women ages 30 to 65 should get a Pap test every 3 years or a Pap test and HPV test every 5 years.

When abnormal cells are found early, they can be removed or treated before they ever turn into cancer.

You May Qualify for **FREE** Cervical Cancer Screening if You:

- ✓ Are 21 years old or older
- ✓ Have low income
- ✓ Have no or limited insurance
- ✓ Are not getting these services through Medi-Cal or another government-sponsored program
- ✓ Live in California

To see if you qualify for the Every Woman Counts Program, call **1-800-511-2300** or the California Relay Line **711-1-800-735-2929**.

For more information, please visit:

<http://dhcs.ca.gov/EveryWomanCounts>



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