

Navajo Breast & Cervical Cancer Prevention Program

CERVICAL CANCER PREVENTION

Cervical Cancer - Ats'íí bitł'óól dah díníisééh áádóó ba'át'e' hóló yileehígíí asdzání biishch'id bílátahgi díníisééh

One of the most preventable cancers in women is cancer of the cervix. The cervix is the lower, narrow end of the uterus connecting to the vagina. Cancer can grow on the cervical tissue without a woman having any symptoms. However, this cancer can be found with a pap test. Early changes, long before cancer has developed, can also be seen on a pap test. These changes can often be easily treated in the clinic.

A pap test is different from a pelvic exam. A pap test is when a speculum is placed to open the vagina and a few cells are taken by gently scraping or brushing the cervix. This sample is sent to the laboratory for testing.

At the same time as the pap test, a human papilloma virus (HPV) test may be done by taking more cells or by using the same ones from the Pap test. HPV is a virus passed from one person to another during sex. There are many types of HPV, however two (types 16 and 18) are the most commonly associated with cervical cancer. They can cause changes in the cervical cells that over time can develop into cancer. However, most HPV infections do not lead to cancer.

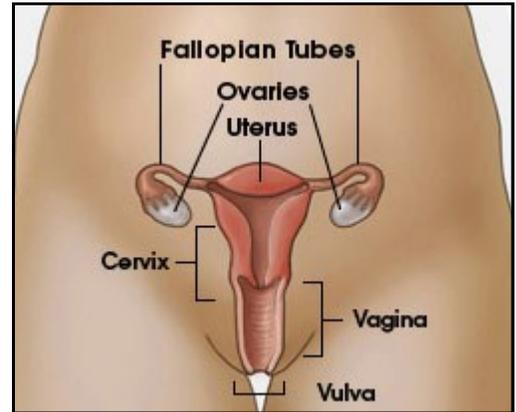


Image from CDC Website

How can I prevent cervical cancer?

- ✦ *Get a regular Pap Test*; recommended to start at age 21 to 65.
- ✦ *Get a regular HPV Test*; recommended to start at age 30 to 65.
- ✦ *Get a Co-test (Pap Test and HPV Test)*; recommended to start at age 30 to 65.
- ✦ *Follow up with your health care provider if results are not normal.*
- ✦ *Get the HPV Vaccine*: The HPV Vaccine is approved and recommended for both males and females. It is routinely given at 11 or 12 years of age, but it may be given beginning at age 9 years through age 26

Age for HPV Vaccination	Number of HPV Vaccine doses	Second Dose Interval	Third Dose Interval
9–14	2 Doses	6–12 months	Not Needed
15–26	3 Doses	1–2 months	6 months

years. It is approved for adults up to age 45, although it is not recommended after age 26. The Vaccine provides immunization against the virus that causes

cervical cancer and many other cancers. Please consult your Medical Provider to see if you are eligible to get vaccinated.

- ✦ *Quit smoking or do not start.*
- ✦ *Use a condom during sex.* Using condoms has been associated with a lower rate of cervical cancer.
- ✦ *Limit your number of sexual partners.*

Undiagnosed cervical cancer can spread to other parts of the body, but if detected early, it can be cured! If you have not had a pap test recently, please call your local health care facility to make an appointment.

CONTACT INFORMATION: P.O. Box 1390; Window Rock, AZ 86515 - Telephone: (928) 871-6348