



advantage you

WESTERN HEALTH ADVANTAGE |

CERVICAL HEALTH 2017



WHO IS AT RISK FOR CERVICAL CANCER?

All women are at risk for cervical cancer, but it occurs most often in women over age 30.

Protect yourself. Talk to your doctor.

Not sure how to start the conversation?

- > Ask about the recommended health screenings for women for your age group.
- > Discuss any symptoms you may be having.

Since Pap tests also screen for precancerous changes on the cervix, abnormal results do not necessarily mean you have cervical cancer. Decide today to complete your Pap test.

It's time to put you at the top of your to-do list!

Ask your doctor about how often you need preventive screenings, such as mammograms and PAP tests, based on your age, personal health and family history. Learn more by checking out: mywha.org/healthyliving

What causes cervical cancer?

Cervical cancer, which forms in the tissues of the cervix (the organ connecting the uterus and vagina), is almost always caused by human papillomavirus (HPV) infection, which is spread through sexual contact.

Who is at risk for cervical cancer?

All women are at risk for cervical cancer, but it occurs most often in women over age 30. Your risk for HPV infection is greater if you began having sex at an early age (16 years or younger) and/or if you or your partner has had several partners.

The following are some additional risk factors:

- Smoking
- Having HIV or another condition that weakens the immune system
- Taking birth control pills for five or more years
- Giving birth to three or more children

Who should be screened for cervical cancer?

The American Cancer Society recommends screening for women:

- 21 to 29 years of age every three years using cytology-based screening, commonly known as a Pap test.
- 30 to 65 years of age every three years using cervical cytology or every five years using cervical cytology and HPV co-testing.

Screening is not recommended for women who:

- Are under age 21.
- Are over age 65 who have had adequate prior screening and are not otherwise at high risk for cervical cancer.
- Have had a hysterectomy, including removal of the cervix, and who do not have a history of cervical cancer or high-grade precancerous lesions.

How can I protect myself from HPV and cervical cancer?

HPV causes cervical cancer. However, HPV vaccination alone will not protect you. There are a few things that can further reduce the risk of getting cervical cancer:

- Have regular screening exams
- Don't smoke
- Use condoms during sex
- Get the HPV vaccine

Early detection with treatment saves lives.