



Nevada Cancer
INSTITUTE

CERVICAL CANCER – WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW!

PAP TESTS SAVE LIVES

Nevada ranks tenth in the nation for highest incidence of cervical cancer. Cervical cancer usually grows slowly and may not have symptoms, but can be prevented or detected early with regular Pap tests.

FACTS:

- Each year almost 100 Nevada women will be diagnosed with cervical cancer and approximately 30 will die from the disease.
- Most invasive cervical cancers are found in women who have not had regular Pap testing.
- HPV infection is the major cause of cervical cancer.
- Condoms reduce the risk of HPV infection by approximately 70 percent.
- HPV can be present for years without symptoms.
- Women with Medicare can get a Pap test and pelvic exam once every 24 months.

RISK FACTORS:

Any woman can develop cervical cancer; however, there are known risk factors:

Highest Risk Factors

- Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) infection
- Smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke

Other Risk Factors

- Personal history of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)
- Personal history of chlamydia infection
- Diets low in fruits and vegetables
- Overweight or obesity
- Long-term use of oral contraceptive (OC)
- Women who have had many full-term pregnancies

KNOWN RISK FACTORS FOR HPV INFECTION:

- Having sex at an early age
- Having many sexual partners
- Having a partner who has had many sex partners
- Having sex with an uncircumcised male

- Low socioeconomic status
- Exposed to DES (Diethylstilbestrol)
- Family history of cervical cancer

REDUCING YOUR RISK:

The best ways to lower your risk of cervical cancer are:

- Delay having sexual intercourse and limit number of sexual partners
- Avoid exposure to HPV
- Get Pap tests regularly
- A new vaccine against four of the HPV strains known to cause cervical cancer is available for girls and women ages 9 to 26
- Don't smoke and avoid secondhand smoke
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Eat a colorful variety of fruits and vegetables everyday

SCREENING RECOMMENDATIONS:

According to the American Cancer Society guidelines for prevention and early detection of cervical cancer, women should:

- All women should receive a yearly Pap test three years after they begin having vaginal intercourse, but no later than age 21.
- Beginning at age 30, women who have had three normal Pap test results in a row may be screened every two to three years.
- Women age 70 and older who have at least three normal Pap tests in a row and no abnormal Pap tests in the last 10 years may choose to stop testing.
- Women who have had both their uterus and cervix removed may choose to stop testing unless the surgery was done to treat cervical cancer or a precancerous condition.