

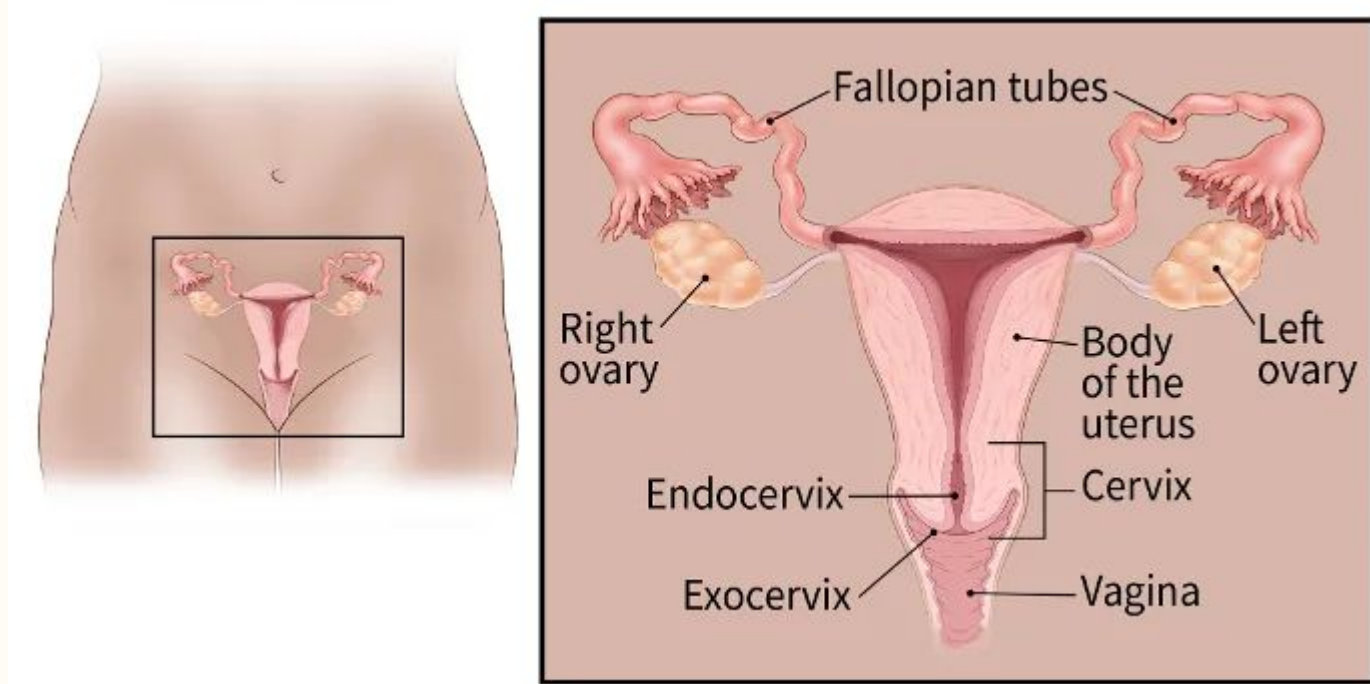
Cervical Cancer Awareness Month

January 2025



What is Cervical Cancer?

Cervical cancer is a cancer that starts in the cells of the cervix. The cervix is the lower, narrow end of the uterus (womb) that connects the uterus to the vagina (birth canal).



Types of Cervical Cancer

- Squamous cell carcinoma- most common form, begins in the exocervix.
- Adenocarcinoma- arises in the endocervix
- Adenosquamous carcinoma or mixed carcinomas- less common, has both features
- Other kinds that can develop but less likely: melanoma, sarcoma, and lymphoma which usually occur in other parts of the body but still can occur here.

Signs and Symptoms of Cervical Cancer

Abnormal vaginal bleeding, such as:

- ◇ bleeding after vaginal sex
 - ◇ bleeding after menopause
 - ◇ spotting between periods
 - ◇ menstrual periods that are longer or heavier than usual.
- Unusual discharge from the vagina.
 - Pain during sex.
 - Pain in the pelvic region.

What can increase your risk of Cervical Cancer

- Human Papillomavirus (HPV)
- Sexual History/Sexual Behaviors
- Smoking
- Birth Control pill and childbearing history
- Obesity
- Family History of Cervical Cancer
- Weakened immune System

Steps to lower your risk of Cervical Cancer

- Get your pap smears
 - Early detection, reduced mortality, treatment options
- Get the HPV vaccine
- Use condoms during sex
- Do NOT smoke

Cervical Cancer Screening Tests

- The Pap Test (pap smear/cervical cytology)
- HPV Tests
- The HPV/Pap cotest

Who should get tested

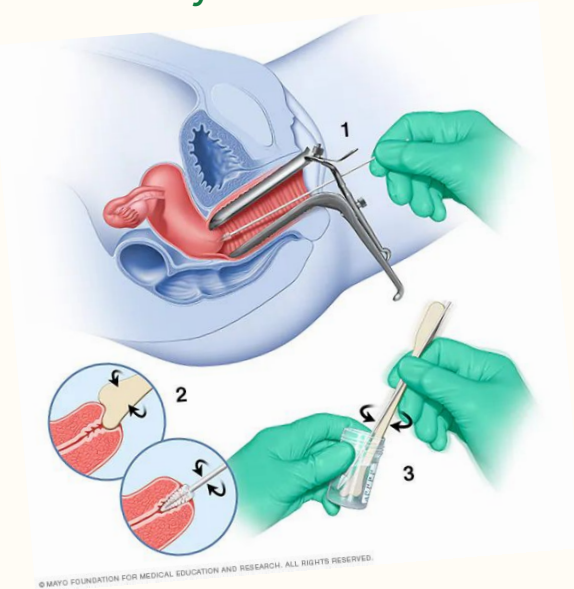
- Women aged 21– 29 years: recommended screening for cervical cancer every 3 years with the Pap test alone.
- Women aged 30 to 65 years: recommend getting screened for cervical cancer using one of the following methods:
 - Pap test every 3 years
 - HPV test every 5 years
 - HPV/Pap cotest every 5 years.

Who should NOT get tested

- Women younger than 21 years (no matter their sexual history unless issues arise)
- Individuals who have had a total hysterectomy (removal of both the uterus and cervix) and do not have a history of a high-grade precancerous lesion (i.e. cervical intraepithelial neoplasia [CIN] grade 2 or 3) or cervical cancer.
- Women older than 65 years who have had adequate prior screening and are not otherwise at high-risk for cervical cancer.

What to expect when getting a Pap smear

- Provider will ask additional questions such as:
 - Are you on your period?
 - When did you last have sexual intercourse? (no sexual activity for 24-48 hrs before pap for best results as it can affect results.)
- Instruments used:
 - Speculum
 - Brush
 - Spatula
- Results get sent to lab



Cervical Cancer Statistics in Maryland

Cervical Cancer Statistics in Maryland:

- According to the American Cancer Society, it is estimated that in 2024:
 - ◇ About 230 new cases of invasive cervical cancer will have been diagnosed in Maryland residents.
 - ◇ About 70 Maryland residents will have died from cervical cancer.

Cancer Prevention Education Screening Treatment CPEST

Eligibility

All program participants must:

- Be uninsured or underinsured
- Have limited income
- Be a Maryland resident

Mammograms & Breast Exams: Ages 40 – 64

Cervical Exams & PAP Tests: Ages 21 – 64

Colonoscopies: Age 45+ (or under 45 with family history and/or symptoms)

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