



HPV and Cancer of the Cervix: What You Need to Know

Did you know?

HPV (Human Papillomavirus) is the most common virus that people can get through sexual contact. There are over 30 types of HPV spread by sexual contact.

- Most HPV infections will go away on their own and cause no health problems.
- Several types of HPV can lead to cancer of the cervix in women. (The cervix is the opening to the woman's uterus, inside the woman's vagina.)
- These same types of HPV can cause less common cancers of the anus, penis, and vagina.
- Other types of HPV cause genital warts in men and women. Having genital warts does not lead to cancer.

You can prevent HPV.

HPV is spread when the skin around the penis, vagina, or anus touches during sexual contact. A person can have HPV and not know it. You can't tell when you look at a person whether he or she has it. But you can lower your chances of getting HPV. Here's how:

- Use condoms every time you have sex.
- Have sex with only one person who only has sex with you.
- You can choose not to have any sexual contact.
- Ask about the HPV vaccine.

What is the HPV vaccine?

HPV vaccines can help prevent cancer of the cervix and genital warts.

- The HPV vaccine is for pre-teen girls and young women up to 26 years of age.
- It works best when you get all 3 shots before you ever start having sex.
- You can still get the vaccine even if you have already had sex before.

You can prevent cancer of the cervix.

All women should get Pap tests, even if they have had the HPV vaccine. The Pap test checks for changes in the cells of the cervix. Sometimes, these changes could lead to cancer if not treated. If you get a Pap test, your doctor can see these changes and treat you before cancer develops. So remember:

- Get a Pap test as often as your doctor recommends.
- Ask about the HPV vaccine.
- Use condoms every time you have sex.

Take care of yourself!

Break the chain of HPV and cancer of the cervix!

Want to find out more? Go to:
<http://www.cdc.gov/std/hpv>