

What You Need To Know About Cervical Cancer



FACTS

- Worldwide, cervical cancer is the most common cancer among women.
- Infection with the Human Papillomavirus Virus (HPV) is responsible for most abnormal Pap tests and almost all cases of cervical cancer.
- Each year, about 15,000 women in the U.S. learn they have cancer of the cervix.
- Cervical cancer is 100% curable, if detected early enough through regular Pap test screening.
- Only 67.2% of low income women in Wyoming report having had a Pap in the last 3 years compared to 88.5% of higher income women.*

* Low income defined as household income below \$25,000 a year.

Source: Wyoming Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. WY Department of Health (2004-2005)

DID YOU KNOW?

- The Pap test detects abnormal cells in and around the cervix.
- Pap test screening should begin within three years of the onset of sexual activity or by age 21 and should be repeated at least every 3 years, as recommended by your health care provider.
- Women who have had a hysterectomy due to cervical cancer or pre-cancer still need to have Pap tests!
- HPV testing, in addition to Pap testing, may be useful if you have an abnormal Pap test - especially if you are over age 30; ask your health care provider!
- The new HPV vaccine has been approved for females ages 9-26; ask your health care provider!
- Precancerous changes of the cervix generally do not cause any symptoms and they are not detected unless a Pap test is performed.
- Symptoms of cervical cancer may only appear after the cancer has invaded nearby tissues; the first sign of cervical cancer may be abnormal vaginal bleeding.

RISK FACTORS

- Failure to receive regular Pap test screening, as recommended by your health care provider.
- Initiating sex at a young age (before age 18); the immature cervix is more at-risk for HPV infection.
- Multiple sex partners or a sex partner who has had multiple sex partners.
- Immunosuppressive disorders such as HIV/AIDS.
- Women born between 1941 & 1971 whose mothers took DES during pregnancy may be at increased risk.

What you can do to avoid cervical cancer ...

- Get regular Pap tests, as recommended by your health care provider.
- Use condoms.
- Do not use tobacco products.
- Eat healthy foods including dark green leafy vegetables and red/orange/yellow fruits and vegetables (high in anti-oxidants).

Wyoming Cervical Care Resources

Caring for Women Program: 1-888-556-8074

Wyoming Breast & Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program: 1-800-264-1296

Women's Wellness at Wyoming Migrant Health: 1-877-754-5252 (Big Horn Basin Area)

Other Resources: Your local WY Family Planning Clinic or Public Health Nursing Office

For Additional Information: Contact the **National Cancer Institute/Cancer**

Information Service 1-800-4-CANCER - www.cancer.gov

Or the **American Cancer Society** 1-800-ACS-2345 - www.cancer.org

Wyoming Health
Council

2120 O'Neil Ave.
Cheyenne, WY
82001

307-632-3640



**Wyoming Women's Health
Coordinating Center**
at The Wyoming Health Council



www.wyowomenshealth.org