

# Pap and HPV Tests: What to Expect

Cervical cancer screening is an essential part of a woman's routine health care. This includes two types of screening tests: the **Pap test** and the **HPV test**.

## What causes cancer of the cervix?

Nearly all cancers of the cervix are caused by human papillomavirus (HPV).

## How can I lower my risk of getting HPV?

There are a few ways:

- Ask your Doctor about the HPV vaccine, which is a series of two or three shots. It's best to get the shots before you start having sex.
- Have sex with only one person who only has sex with you.
- Use a condom each time you have sex.
- Choose not to have any sexual contact.

## What screening tests can I take?

Test	Age	Recommendation
Pap test only	21 – 65 years old	every 3 years
HPV test only	30 – 65 years old	every 5 years
Pap and HPV combined (Co-test)	30 – 65 years old	every 5 years

Please keep seeing your Primary Care Doctor yearly for a Well-Woman checkup. Your Doctor may recommend more frequent Pap testing.



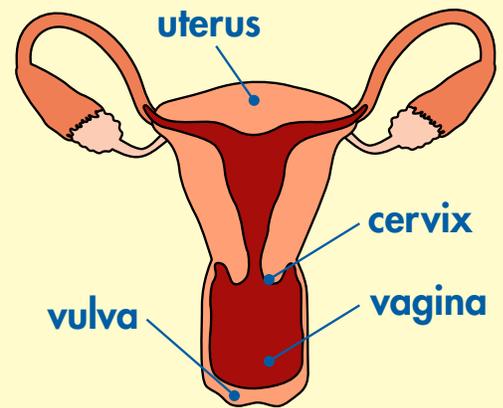
## What's the difference between a Pap test and an HPV test?

- **The Pap test** (or Pap smear) is done to check your cervix (the opening of the uterus) for changes that could lead to cancer. Cells are removed with a swab and then tested to see if they are normal or if changes can be seen. By checking for those changes, a woman can get the treatment she needs before it becomes cancer.

*Note: All women should start having Pap tests when they are 21 years old. Some women may need a Pap test more often, especially if they had an abnormal test in the past.*

- **The HPV test** is done to check for human papillomavirus (HPV). HPV is passed by skin-to-skin contact. It can be spread during any kind of sex using the mouth, vagina, penis, or anus.
- **Co-test:** When the HPV test is done at the same time as the Pap test, this is called co-testing. Doctors prefer this for women 30 years old or older. Co-testing can help Doctors find early cervical cancers or pre-cancers.

### Inside a woman's body



**Talk to your Doctor about how often to get a Pap Test**

**Talk to your Doctor or Nurse about the cervical cancer screening that is right for you.**



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