CERVICAL CANCER SCREENING

Know your risk

What is cancer screening?
Screening tests may help identify those who are at risk of developing certain types of cancer. For cervical cancer, there are primarily two types of screening tests that healthcare providers use today, the Pap test and/or the HPV test.

What is a Pap test?
A Pap test looks for abnormal cells growing on the cervix that can be early signs of cancer. A healthcare provider collects cell samples from your cervix and sends the sample to a laboratory for examination under a microscope by a trained professional.

What is an HPV test?
An HPV test detects the DNA of high-risk human papillomavirus (HPV) at infection levels that have been demonstrated to cause high grade cervical disease or pre-cancer. The sample needed for an HPV test is taken from the cervix by a healthcare provider the same way as a Pap test. The sample is sent to a lab to be tested for high-risk HPV on an automated instrument using molecular technology.

What is the difference between the Pap test and HPV test?
The Pap test looks for changes in cells before they develop into cancer. The HPV test looks for the presence of high-risk HPV which are known to cause about 99% of all cervical cancers. Hence, the HPV test can be a better predictor of your risk for cervical disease.

Not all HPV-positive women have the same risk.
Risk of developing precancer within 3 years

| HPV 16-positive: | 1 in 4 developed precancer |
| HPV 18-positive: | 1 in 9 developed precancer |
| 12 other HPV-positive: | 1 in 19 developed precancer |

How do I know which screening test is right for me?
You and your healthcare provider can discuss which cervical cancer screening test is right for you. Medical guidelines offer different ways that the HPV and Pap tests can be used depending on a number of factors such the patient's age and medical history.

The 2012 US Cervical Cancer Screening Guidelines are summarized below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>SCREENING METHOD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21-29</td>
<td>Pap test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-65</td>
<td>Co-testing (Pap + HPV test) preferred or the Pap test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>Screening may not be required with adequate screening history</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In 2015, two leading medical societies issued guidance recommending HPV first-line primary screening as a safe option for cervical cancer in women ages 25 and older.

What does this mean to you?
Healthcare providers now have the option to use the cobas® HPV Test in place of the Pap test for women over the age of 25. The cobas® HPV Test is the first and only test approved by the FDA for first-line primary screening for cervical cancer.

Do I still need to be screened for cervical cancer if I received the HPV vaccine?
Yes. Although the vaccine covers the two highest risk types, HPV 16 and HPV 18, it does not cover all the high-risk HPV types. Therefore, experts still recommend you continue to get screened regularly for cervical cancer even after you’ve received the vaccine.

NORMAL PAP DOES NOT ALWAYS MEAN CANCER FREE. UP TO 1/3 OF CERVICAL CANCER OCCURRED IN WOMEN WITH A NORMAL PAP.

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The importance of an annual health exam

Some women feel that if they do not need a Pap or HPV test every year then they can skip their annual health exam. Even though your annual appointment may not require a Pap or HPV test, you should still visit your healthcare provider for a health exam to discuss other health concerns, such as:

- Physical exam
- Family planning
- Mammography and colonoscopy screening
- Counseling on menopause and/or osteoporosis prevention
- Exercise and nutrition

What is the cobas® HPV Test?

The cobas® HPV Test is used in cervical cancer screening to determine a women's risk of precancer or cancer. The test provides three results in one test: individual results for HPV 16 and HPV 18, in addition to a pooled result for 12 other high-risk HPV types. Having immediate information about your risk of cervical cancer can help you and your doctor determine what next steps to take.

References