



What is cervical cancer?

Cancer that forms in tissues of the cervix (the organ connecting the uterus and vagina). It is usually a slow-growing cancer that may not have symptoms.

Is it common?

In 2008, an estimated 11,070 new cases will be diagnosed and 3,870 deaths will occur in the U.S.

What causes it?

Almost all cervical cancer is caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV), a common viral infection spread through sexual contact. Many women may have HPV, but few will get cervical cancer. An HPV test and vaccine are available.



The facts about cervical cancer

What are the symptoms?

Early cervical cancers usually don't cause symptoms. Advanced cancers may cause abnormal vaginal bleeding and increased vaginal discharge. Although you may feel healthy, abnormal changes can appear without any symptoms.

How is it detected?

A simple Pap test (also called Pap smear) checks for cell changes in the cervix that could be or become cancer.

How is cervical cancer treated?

Depending on how advanced it is, surgery, radiation and chemotherapy can be used. Five-year survival rates are 70-85% for early-stage cancer, and approximately 40% for late-stage cancer that has spread to other areas.

How can I prevent cervical cancer?

Have your first Pap test three years after you start having sex, or at age 21 (whichever is first). Then have a Pap test every one to three years on the advice of your health care practitioner.

**For more information about cervical cancer,
talk to your health care practitioner.**

