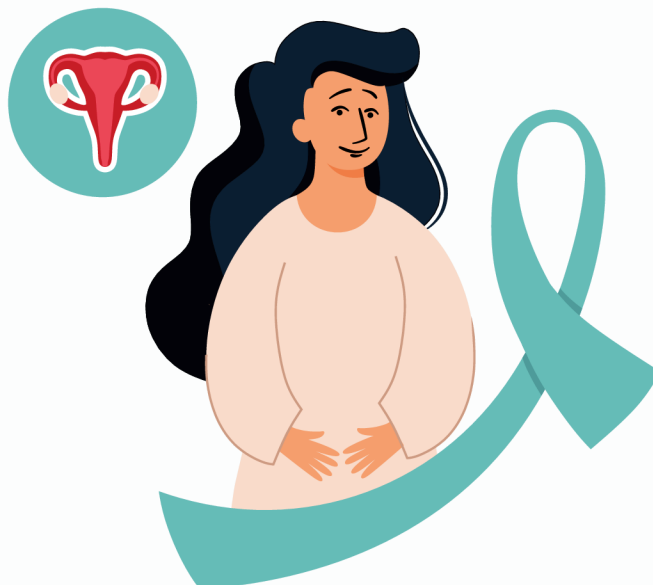


# We Can Prevent Cervical Cancer



Each year, there are more than 13,000 cases of cervical cancer in the United States. **Yet we have all the tools we need to prevent cervical cancer today.**

The cell changes that can lead to cervical cancer are caused by HPV—human papillomavirus. Almost everyone who is sexually active will have HPV at some point.

Most HPV infections are harmless. Usually the immune system clears HPV within a few months. Sometimes HPV infections don't clear naturally though. When this happens, women are at risk for cervical cancer.

There are two important tools to prevent cervical cancer: vaccination and screening.

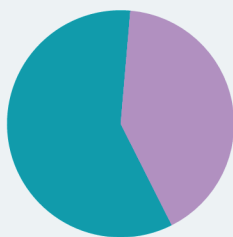


The **HPV vaccine** prevents infection with the types of HPV that can cause cervical cancer.



**Regular screening** with Pap and HPV tests can help find problems early and prevent cancer from developing.

**Only 58.5% of adolescents ages 13–15 have received the recommended doses of the HPV vaccine**



**About 1 in 4 women (26.1%) haven't been screened as recommended**

SOURCE: Healthy People 2030, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

## We Can Do Better!

# Prevention at Every Age

11-12



The recommended age for HPV vaccine is 11-12—**for both girls and boys**. But vaccination can start as early as age 9.

**Why so young?** The vaccine produces a stronger immune response when taken during the preteen years. Also, fewer shots are required. Between ages 9 and 14, only two doses are needed. Starting at age 15, three doses are required. The vaccine is designed to prevent infection, so vaccination is recommended at a young age *before* kids are exposed to the virus.

21



Women should get their first Pap test at age 21. The Pap can find abnormal cell changes on the cervix. If changes are found, they can be treated before they turn into cancer.

Cervical cancer is rare before age 21. The cancer progresses slowly so experts don't recommend earlier screening, even for people who are sexually active.

30



There are three choices for women once they turn 30:

- A Pap test alone every three years
- Co-testing with a Pap and HPV test, every five years
- An HPV test alone, every five years

Some healthcare providers may offer all three options, others only one. The only bad option is not getting screened!

65



At 65, women can stop screening if they have had:

- Three consecutive negative Pap results, or
- Two consecutive negative co-testing results

Both negative tests must have been done within the last 10 years, and the results of the most recent test can't be more than five years old.

Visit the National Cervical Cancer Coalition to learn more about cervical cancer prevention.  
[www.nccc-online.org](http://www.nccc-online.org)