



### WHERE CAN I FIND A DOCTOR OR OTHER HEALTH PRACTITIONER FOR A HPV SCREEN?

Most general practices offer Pap tests as do many Community Health Centres and Aboriginal Health Medical Services. There are also specially trained nurses who can take HPV Screening, many of whom are female.

#### Want More information?

For more information about HPV Screening and preventing cervical cancer visit [www.vccr.org](http://www.vccr.org) or [www.papscreen.org.au](http://www.papscreen.org.au) or call the Registry on 03 9250 0399 for more information or to update your details.

## YOUR HPV TEST IS NEGATIVE: WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

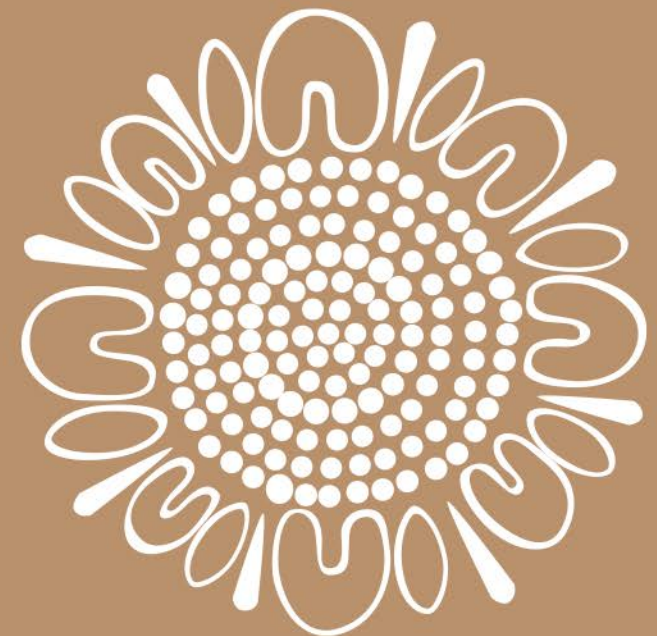
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## HPV AND CERVICAL CANCER

- HPV (Human Papillomavirus) is a virus that is spread by genital skin-to-skin contact during sex.
- HPV Infection is very common. Four out of five men and women will have HPV at some point in their lives.
- There are many different types or strains of HPV; some types can cause cervical cancer.
- HPV types that can cause cervical cancer are called "high-risk".
- Most HPV infection is cleared by your body's immune system and causes no problems.
- Infection over many years with certain 'high-risk' types of HPV can cause serious cell changes in the cervix.
- The cell changes usually cause no symptoms (or obvious problems); so they can only be found by having regular screenings like a Pap test or an HPV test.
- However with regular HPV Screening more than 90% of cases of squamous cancer of the cervix can be prevented.

## YOUR HPV TEST IS NEGATIVE!

### What does this mean?

- The test found you do not currently have high-risk HPV infection. This means you are at very low risk at the moment for cervical cancer and there is no need for follow up of this test unless you have any symptoms. However, no screening test is 100% accurate and regular HPV Screenings are recommended.

## WHAT IS HPV SCREENING?

- A HPV Screen looks for changes in the cells of the upper vagina. These changes are almost always caused by Human Papillomavirus (HPV) and are usually not serious. However, if left over many years they could develop into cervical cancer. Finding these changes early means they can usually be treated before anything serious happens.
- A HPV Screen is not a check for ovarian cancer or sexually transmitted infections.

## WHO SHOULD DO A HPV SCREEN?

- All women who have ever had sex should have HPV Screenings from age 18, or two years after first having sex (whichever is later) and continue until age 70.
- Women who are no longer having sex, or who have been in one relationship for a long time should still have HPV Screenings. This is because cell changes can take many years to develop. Some women who have had a hysterectomy still need to have HPV Screenings. Ask your doctor or health practitioner if you're not sure.
- If you have any symptoms such as unusual bleeding or pain in the pelvic area, see your doctor even if your last HPV Screening was normal.

## TELL ME ABOUT HPV AGAIN

- HPV is a very common virus which usually has no symptoms and is cleared from the body naturally. Occasionally it causes serious disease.
- Genital HPV is spread through genital skin-to-skin contact. Both men and women can be infected with this virus.
- Many HPV types affect the genital area (this includes the cervix). A few of these types ("high-risk") can cause cervical cancer.
- If women have infections for many years with one of the high-risk HPV types, changes may develop over many years into cancer. If found early these cell changes can be treated and cancer prevented.

## DO I NEED A HPV SCREEN IF I HAVE HAD THE CERVICAL CANCER VACCINE?

Yes, the vaccine only protects against two of the 15 high-risk HPV types. Although these two types caused the majority of cervical cancers, you could be infected with other high-risk types.

This is why you need to have routine screening tests even after vaccination. More information is available at [www.hpvvaccine.org.au](http://www.hpvvaccine.org.au)

## HOW ACCURATE IS A PAP TEST OR HPV TEST?

- Like all screening tests, the Pap test is not 100% accurate. This is due to a variety of reasons, for example, the test may not always include abnormal cells even if these are present on your cervix.
- An HPV test collected by vaginal self-sampling is as accurate as a doctor collected Pap test.



**Congratulations!**  
**You've taken the first step  
towards protecting yourself  
against cervical cancer.**

