Very Important Invitation

Raising Awareness Of Cervical Screening

NHS
Suffolk and North East Essex

Cervical Screening

Frequently Asked Questions

Translated into easy read
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Ace Anglia

easy read

About this booklet

This is an easy read booklet about cervical screening.

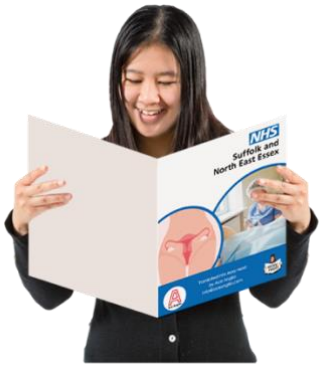
- Section 1
- Section 2
- Section 3
- Section 4

We have split this booklet into sections to make it easier to read.

Blue Words

The words in **blue** are ones we think need to be explained.

We explain what the blue words mean.



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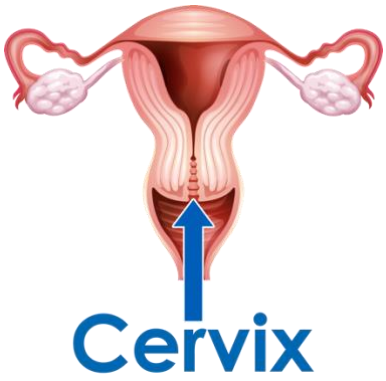
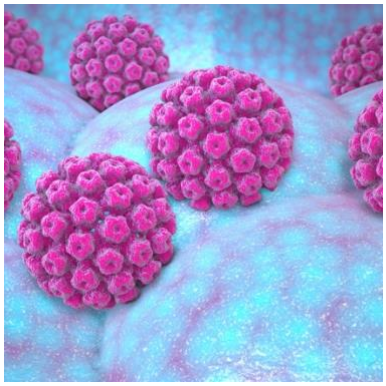
What is cervical screening?

Cervical screening is to check the health of your **cervix** by taking a small sample of cells.



Cervix – Is part of your body, it is a small organ in your vagina.

The cervix is a tube that lets periods flow out and the tube that sperm travel up during sex.



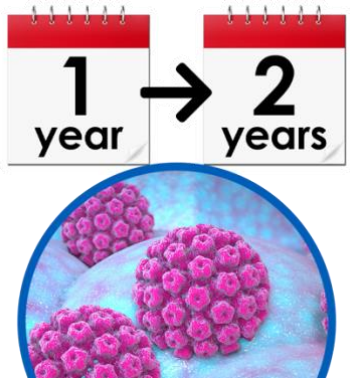
Cervical screening tests for **Human Papilloma Virus** (HPV), a virus which can cause cell changes of the cervix.

Human Papilloma Virus – a virus that can be passed through sexual contact and other skin-to-skin contact.

It can cause health problems like warts on different parts of the body.

You may not know you have the virus.

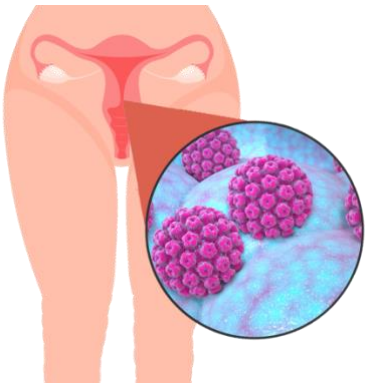
HPV is very common, and most people will get the virus at some point in their lifetime.



The body should clear it within 1-2 years.

Do I need to have cervical screening if I have never had sex or no longer having sex?

If you have never had sex, then your risk of getting HPV is low.



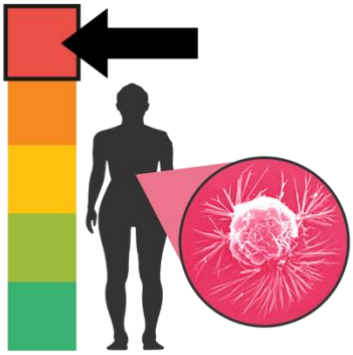
A low risk still means you may get HPV at some point.

This is why attending for cervical screening when you are invited is really important.

What does cervical screening involve?

Cervical screening involves taking a small sample of cells from the cervix.

The test looks for HPV.



Having HPV could mean a higher chance of cervical cancer developing.

Who is invited for cervical screening?

Cervical screening is available to people aged 25 to 64.

If you are registered with a GP, you should receive an invite by post:

- every 3 years between ages 25-49

- every 5 years between ages 50-64

If you test positive for HPV you will be contacted sooner.

The screening is done in your GP surgery.

If you are 65 or older you will no longer receive invites.

If you are 65 or older and you have any cervical cancer symptoms or concerns you should contact your GP. See page 24 for a list of symptoms.

If you have missed a cervical screening, or want to know when it is due, please contact either:

- Very Important Invitation' on: sgpfed.veryimportantinvitation@suffolkfed.org.uk

- or call your GP surgery

Will I be invited to cervical screening if I was assigned female at birth?

Yes, you will be invited to cervical screening if you are registered with your GP as female.

If you are registered with your GP as male, you may need to let a "Very Important Invitation' know first.

Contact "Very Important Invitation' by emailing: sgpfed.veryimportantinvitation@suffolkfed.org.uk

Do I need cervical screening if I was assigned female at birth?

Yes, if you have a cervix, you need cervical screening.

Will I be invited to cervical screening if I was assigned male at birth?

Yes, you will be invited to cervical screening if you are registered with your GP as female.

If you are registered with your GP as male, you will not be invited to cervical screening.

Do I need cervical screening if I was assigned male at birth?

No, as you do not have a cervix, you do not need cervical screening.

How often will I be invited for a cervical screening?

If you are registered with a GP, you should receive an invite by post:

- every 3 years between ages 25-49

- every 5 years between ages 50-64

If you test positive for HPV you will be contacted sooner.

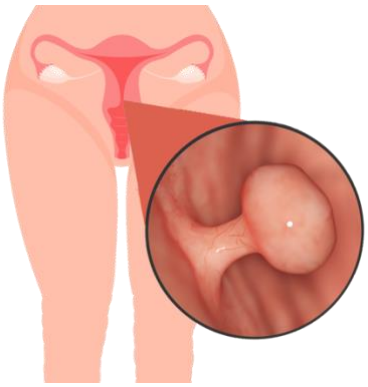
The screening is done in your GP surgery.

It is important to come along to your screening each time you are invited.

Why should I have my cervical screening?

Screening can help to find cancers or early signs of cancer, even before you notice any symptoms.

It can also prevent cervical cancer by finding **non-cancerous growths**.



Non-cancerous growths are known as polyps and are things that can grow inside your body which might turn into cancer if left untreated.

What happens during cervical screening?

You can find out by looking at easy read guide to cervical screening at www.gov.uk/government/publications/cervical-screening-easy-read-guide

There is a useful Cervical Screening video at www.nhs.uk/conditions/cervical-screening/what-happens/

Watch a video where Shenah talks about her cervical screening at [XXXXXXXXXXXX]

What could the results of the screening be?

Your results will usually be sent to you by post within 2-4 weeks.

A negative result – this means that there was no HPV found and your cervical cancer risk is low.

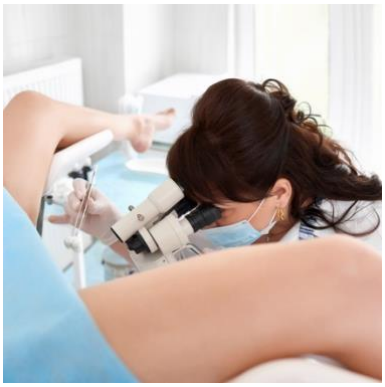
You will be invited back in 3 or 5 years depending on your age.

An HPV positive result with no cell changes – this means you have HPV but the cells look healthy close up.

So to give the virus a chance to clear, you will be invited back in 1 year.

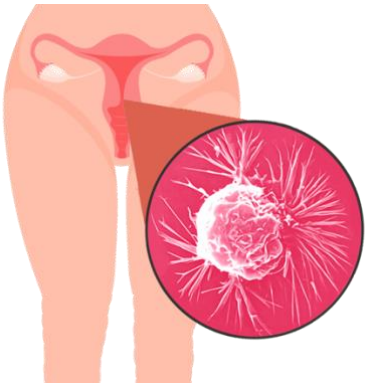
An HPV positive result with cell changes – this means you have HPV and the cells seen had some changes.

This doesn't mean you have cancer.



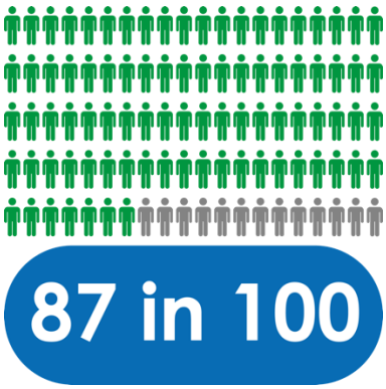
A doctor or a nurse will need to look at cells more closely at the hospital.

An inadequate result – this means not enough cells were taken so you will need to repeat the screening after 3 months.

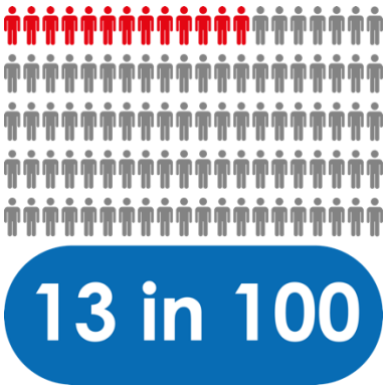


A negative result does not mean you will never get cervical cancer.

You should continue to look out for any symptoms of cervical cancer and complete your next screening when you are invited.



87 people in 100 get a negative result.



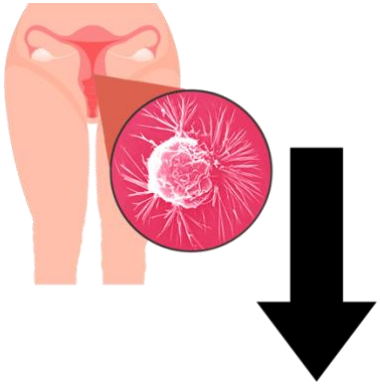
13 people in 100 get an HPV-positive result.

4 people in 100 get referred for further testing.

If you need further testing, you will see a doctor or nurse who is trained to check for any problems or diseases in the cervix.

What are the benefits of cervical screening?

Screening is the best way to catch cervical cancer changes early.

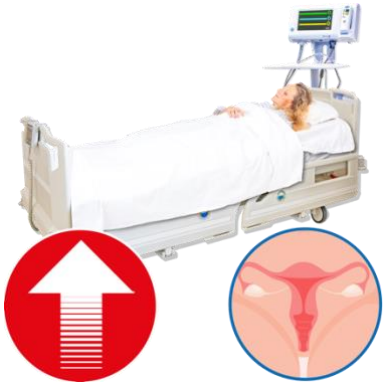


Taking part in screening reduces your risk of getting cervical cancer.

It can also identify other cervical conditions.

It is recommended that everyone who is between 25-64 years old should have a cervical screening.

Cervical screening saves lives and is recognised for its success.



Without it, more people would get cervical cancer and die of it each year.

Can I help someone I care for attend a cervical screening?

You can help someone you care for who needs assistance to attend a screening.

If they give you permission to attend and if they understand what will happen at screening.

Speak to a GP for advice if they do not have the ability to give their consent.

For example, if they:

- do not understand what cervical screening is

- are unable to communicate their wishes

- are unable to make a decision about having cervical screening

Their GP will have access to the person's medical records and knowledge of their medical health.

They can advise you about what may be in the person's best interests.

For more information on making a decision in someone's best interests, see Making decisions: A guide for family, friends and other unpaid carers (PDF, 547kb). (actually link)

If you would like advice of support for yourself or someone you care for to access cervical screening you can speak to a nurse from The Very Important Invitation by email:

sgpfed.veryimportantinvitation@suffolkfed.org.uk

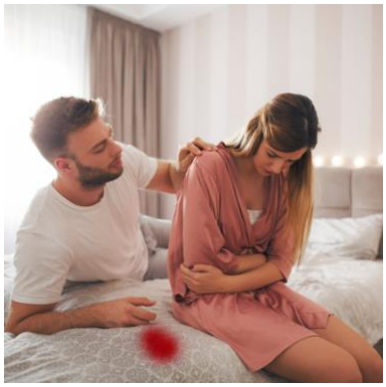
What happens to samples after testing?

We keep the information about your result so we can check you are treated correctly.

We also use it to see how many people are having the cervical cancer screening test.

What are the symptoms of cervical cancer that I should watch out for?

Bleeding between your periods.



Bleeding during or after sexual intercourse.

Bleeding after the menopause.

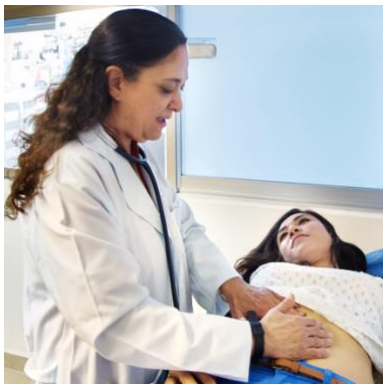
Vaginal discharge that is unusual for you.

Pain during sexual intercourse.

Pain in your lower back, between your hip bones (pelvis), or in your lower tummy.

Remember, these symptoms can be caused by other conditions, not just cancer.

But if you do have any of these symptoms or anything else that is not normal for you, go to see your GP.



They can examine you and do further tests, if necessary, such blood tests or ultrasound scans.

Your doctor may tell you to see a gynaecologist who specialised in finding and treating issues relating to a woman's reproductive health.

This screening booklet was co-produced by:

- Ace Anglia
- East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust
- Suffolk GP Federation

This booklet was translated into easy read by Ace Anglia.

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