



Everything you need to know about cervical screening

Cervical Screening Saves Lives

For more details contact your
GP practice or visit our website:

screeningsaveslives.co.uk

Developed by
**Public Health
South Tees**

What is cervical screening?

Cervical screening is also known as a smear test. It checks the health of your cervix (the lower part of your womb). It's just like going to the dentist to check the health of your teeth and gums.

It is a simple test. A small sample of cells are taken from the surface of the cervix. These are checked to see that they are normal and healthy.

The test is FREE. It is offered to people aged 25 to 64 with a cervix, whatever their sexuality or ethnic background.



Cervical screening is important because...

It detects cell changes which could lead to cervical cancer. Timely treatment can then be provided.

Around 2,000 lives are saved every year in England because of cervical screening.



How do I know when my screening is due?

When your screening is due you will be sent a letter. You will be asked to make an appointment with your GP practice or sexual health service.

If you have missed your appointment don't wait for a letter. Always contact your GP practice straight away if you experience symptoms such as irregular bleeding.

You can go for screening at:

- Your local GP practice.
- Your local sexual health and contraception service.

Once you receive your letter you should:

- Make your appointment.
- Ask questions or raise concerns with your nurse at your appointment.
- Let the nurse know of any helpful changes you require to make your experience more comfortable.

Remember:

- The test takes less than 5 minutes to do.
- It will always be a female health care worker carrying out your test.
- 12,000 women a day in the UK attend their cervical screening!
- For 90% of women the test result is normal and no further tests are needed until your next routine invite.



After your appointment:

- Within 2 weeks, you will be sent a letter to tell you the results and a copy will be sent to your GP.
- The test will find any changes. Early treatment can stop them from turning into cancer.

Had the HPV vaccine?

- The HPV vaccine doesn't stop all types of cervical cancer. Even if you have had the vaccine, regular screening is still important to make sure things are okay.



For your peace of mind:

- Your nurse doesn't mind what you look like down there. They will just be really pleased you're being screened.
- If you have any worries or concerns, mention them to your nurse. They will want to do all they can to put you at ease.



You still need to attend cervical screening if:

- You are between the ages of 25 to 64 years old.
- You are feeling perfectly fit and healthy.
- You have had a cervical screening test before.
- You are not sexually active.
- You have already gone through menopause.
- You have had the HPV vaccine.
- You have had baby. It is advised that you wait until it has been over 12 weeks since the birth.
- You have had an abnormal result from a cervical screening test before.
- You are in a same sex relationship.

Whatever your age, if you have symptoms such as irregular bleeding, don't wait for your screening invitation - contact your GP practice straight away.



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