



National  
Cervical  
Screening  
Programme

# Cervical Screening



## What you need to know

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HE1209



## Before you start



Some of the information in this document may make people:

- upset
- worried.



This information is not meant to scare anyone.

If you are worried you can talk to your:



- whānau / family
- friends
- doctor.

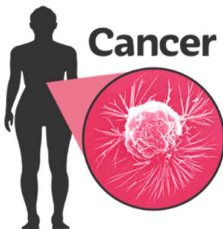
# What you will find in here

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# What this document is about

This document is from:

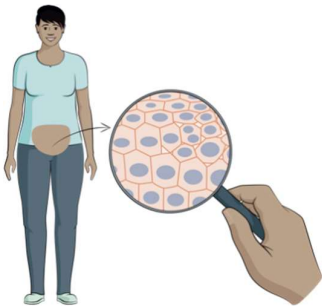
**Health New Zealand**  
Te Whatu Ora



National  
Cervical  
Screening  
Programme

- Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora
- National Cervical Screening Programme.

It is about **cervical cancer screening**.



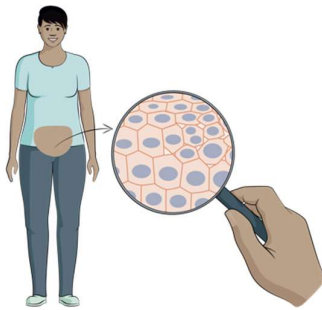
**Screening** is a test to find people who have a higher chance of getting **cancer**.



**Cancer** is a disease that can make people very sick.

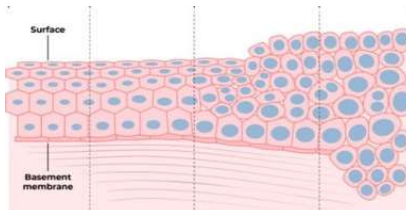


Sometimes cancer can make people so sick they die.

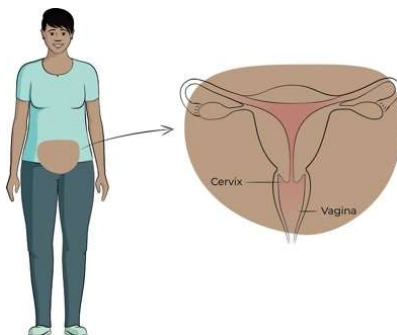


Your body is made of lots of tiny pieces called cells.

Sometimes these cells can go wrong.

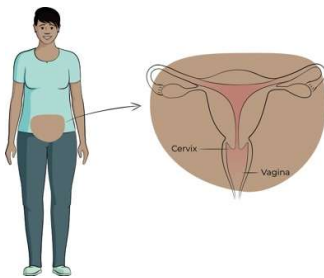
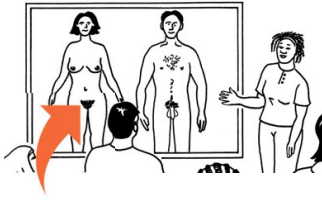


Cancer starts when cells grow out of control.



**Cervical cancer** is cancer that happens in your **cervix**.

The **cervix** is inside your body at the top of your **vagina**.



People use different words for their **vagina** like:

- front bottom
- fanny
- down below
- private parts.

The vagina is the part that is inside your body.

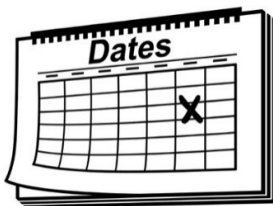


You should get screened for cervical cancer if you are a woman / person with a cervix who:

- is from 25 to 69 years old
- has ever had sex with another person.



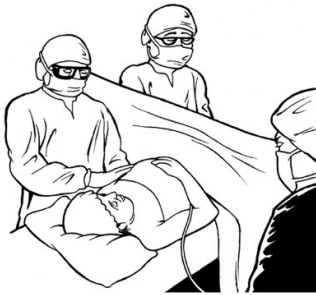
Most people should get screened every 5 years.



Some people need to get screened more often.



If you have had a **hysterectomy** you should ask your doctor if you need to do screening.



A **hysterectomy** is an operation to take out your **uterus**.

A hysterectomy might take out your cervix too.

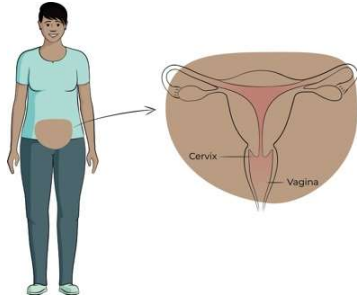


**Uterus** is the part of the body where a baby will grow if you are pregnant.

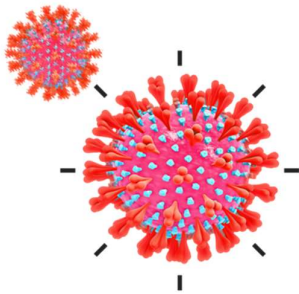
It is also called the womb.



## About cervical cancer

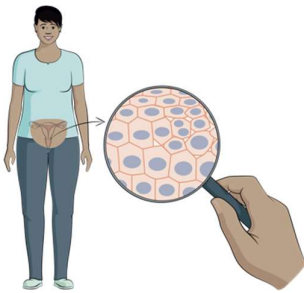


Almost all cervical cancer is caused by **human papillomavirus**.

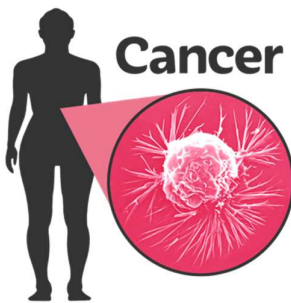


**Human papillomavirus** is a virus you can catch from other people.

In this document we will call human papillomavirus **HPV**.



HPV can change the cells in the cervix.



Those cells can go on to become cervical cancer.



Most people who catch HPV get it from having sex.



You can catch HPV from any kind of sex.



Almost all adults catch HPV at some stage of their lives.



People often cannot tell that they have HPV.



Sometimes HPV can stay **dormant** in your body for many years.



If a virus is **dormant** it means it:

- is not making you unwell
- might not show up on a test.



If a test says you have HPV you might have caught it a long time ago.

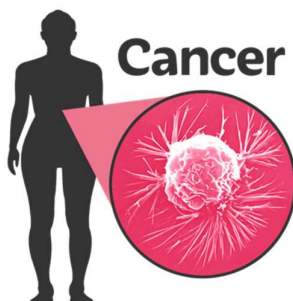
You should get screened for HPV every 5 years even if:



- you have not had sex since your last test
- you have only had sex with the same person since your last test.



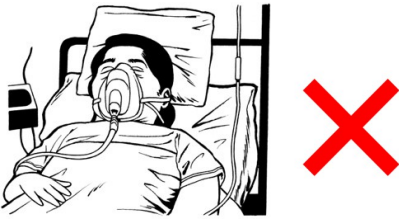
It usually takes more than 10 years for HPV to turn into cervical cancer.



Screening for HPV means we can find the people who are more likely to get cervical cancer.



We can treat changes to the cells in the cervix before they become cancer.



Having HPV does not mean you:

- have cancer
- will get cancer.



Screening for HPV can stop you getting cervical cancer.

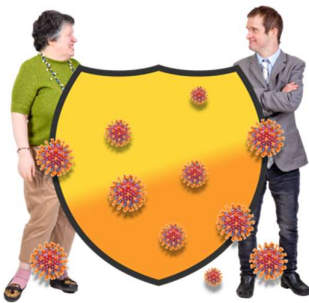


It is also a good idea to get an HPV **vaccine**.



A **vaccine** is a medicine that can keep you safe from getting sick from a disease.

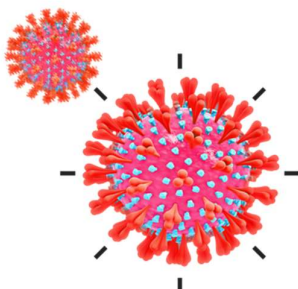
It works by helping your body make **antibodies** against the disease.



**Antibodies** help your body fight off illnesses.



The part of your body that makes antibodies is called your immune system.



You should still get screened for HPV if you have had the vaccine.



Most people who get tested will not have HPV.



About 1 in 10 people who get tested will have HPV.

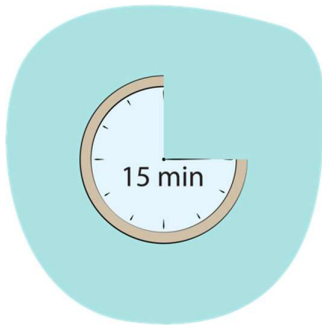


If you have HPV you will need more checks.

## About cervical screening

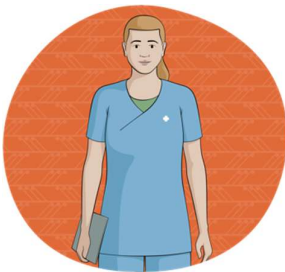


The HPV test is different from the cervical screening you might have had before.



The new test is:

- quick
- easy.



You can choose to:

- have the test done by someone like a:
  - nurse
  - doctor
- do the test yourself.



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Most people only need to have a test every 5 years.



The test is very good at finding people who might get cancer later in their life.



It is safe to do the test when you are pregnant.



You can do the test when you have your period if you are not bleeding very much.

If there is a lot of blood it could stop the test working as well.



# Getting tested



You can get a test from:

- your doctor / GP
- a community health centre for:



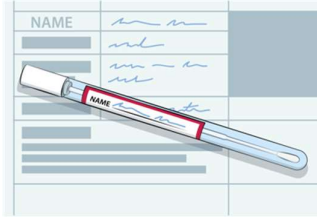
- Māori
- Pacific
- women



- family planning clinics
- sexual health services
- outreach services like:



- marae
- mobile units.



You might also be able to get a test kit to do at home.



You can take a support person to your test.



When you book your test you should say if you:

- have a disability that means you need support
- need an **interpreter**.



**Interpreter** is someone who supports people who do not speak the same language to understand each other.



This can also include a New Zealand Sign Language interpreter.



Most people will have to pay for their test.

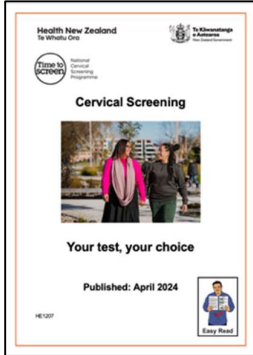


It does not cost money if you:

- are a woman / person with a cervix aged over 30 who has not been tested before
- are Māori / Pacific
- have a community services card
- need a follow-up test.



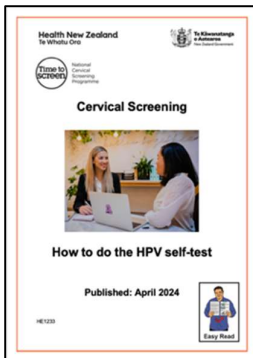
# Where to find more information



You can find out more about cervical screening in these Easy Read documents:

**Cervical Screening – Your test, your choice**

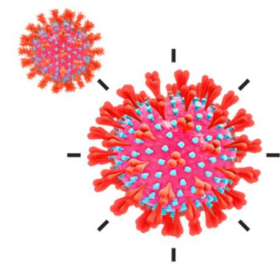
**Cervical Screening – How to do the HPV self-test**



National  
Cervical  
Screening  
Programme

You can get in touch with the National Cervical Screening Programme to find out more about:

- cervical cancer
- HPV
- what your choices are
- where to get a test.





You can find the National Cervical Screening Programme **website** at:

**[www.TimeToCervicalScreen.nz](http://www.TimeToCervicalScreen.nz)**



This website is not in Easy Read.



You can **email** the National Cervical Screening Programme at:

**[screening@health.govt.nz](mailto:screening@health.govt.nz)**



You can **phone** the National Cervical Screening Programme on:

**0800 729 729**



You can use the New Zealand Relay service to phone the National Cervical Screening Programme.



If you find it hard to use the phone the **New Zealand Relay** service is for people who are:

- Deaf / hard of hearing
- deafblind
- speech impaired / find it hard to talk.



You can find out more about the New Zealand Relay service at:

**[www.nzrelay.co.nz](http://www.nzrelay.co.nz)**



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This information has been written by  
the National Cervical Screening  
Programme.



It has been translated into Easy Read  
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Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.



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