

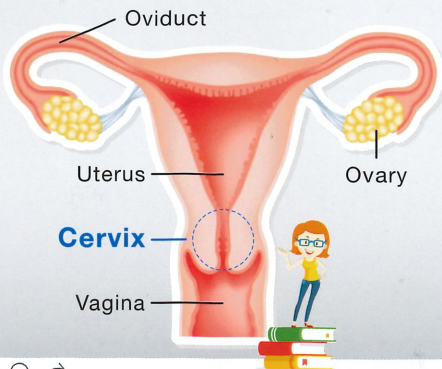


**What You Need to Know
about Cervical Cancer**
**สิ่งที่คุณต้องรู้เกี่ยว
กับมะเร็งปากมดลูก**



AFRO

How to Find (and Feel) Your Cervix ? ...



The cervix is the lowest part of the uterus. It is a small passageway connecting the vagina to the uterine cavity.



What is Cervical Cancer?

Most cervical cancer is caused by a virus called human papillomavirus (HPV). Although most HPV infections clear up on their own and most pre-cancerous lesions resolve spontaneously, there is a risk for all women that HPV infection may become chronic and pre-cancerous lesions progress to invasive cervical cancer.

Pap smear is a screening test for detecting early abnormal changes in the cervix. When such changes are found, they can be treated before cancer develops.

How Common is Cervical Cancer?

According to Centre for Health Protection, Department of Health, cervical cancer is the 8th leading cause of female cancer deaths in Hong Kong. In 2015, a total of 169 women died from this cancer, accounting for 2.8% of female cancer deaths.

The median age at diagnosis was 52.5. However, there has been a decreasing trend of age-standardised incidence and mortality rates of cervical cancer in Hong Kong.

Key Risk Factors for Cervical Cancer

- HPV 16 and 18 infection
- Active sex life, sexual intercourse at earlier age, multiple sexual partners or sexual partner with multiple sexual partners
- Co-infection with sexually-transmitted infections
- Weakened immunity due to chronic kidney disease, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection or other immune system related diseases
- Smoking: A woman who smokes doubles her risk of cervical cancer.



All women who have had sex are at risk for developing cervical cancer. To reduce the risk, remember that it is important to quit smoking, stay healthy, practise safe sex and have regular Pap smear test.

Symptoms of Cervical Cancer

Some patients **may be symptomless**, while some may have the following symptoms:

- Irregular vaginal bleeding between menstrual periods
- Vaginal bleeding for postmenopausal women who no longer have menstrual periods
- Vaginal bleeding after sex
- Painful feeling during sex
- Unusual vaginal discharge, with foul smelling or tinged with blood
- Symptoms of advanced cervical cancer can include:
 - back or pelvic pain
 - difficulty urinating or defecating
 - swelling of one or both legs
 - fatigue
 - weight loss

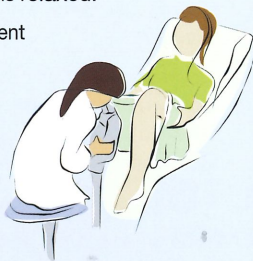


How to Detect and Diagnose Cervical Cancer ?

The doctor may arrange the following tests if cervical cancer is suspected:

- Pap smear test

- The test takes only a few minutes.
- It does not cause pain if the test receiver is relaxed.
- The doctor or nurse will insert an instrument (called speculum) into your vagina to allow visualisation of your cervix which is located deep inside the vagina. A small piece of wooden spatula or plastic brush will then be inserted through the speculum to obtain some cells sample from the surface of the cervix. The specimen will then be sent to the laboratory for examination under microscope.
- If abnormal cells are found, the patient will be recommended to have further tests.



- Colposcopy

Colposcopy is required when abnormality is detected by cervical smear. Colposcopy is like a microscope put near the vagina to allow more detailed examination of the cervix. If there appears to be any suspicious areas, these are made obvious using a solution of diluted vinegar with iodine.

- Biopsy

During the colposcopy examination, any abnormal or suspicious areas will be biopsied for histological examination. After the procedure, some pain, bleeding or discharge may occur, which could usually be controlled using simple measures such as pain-killers.

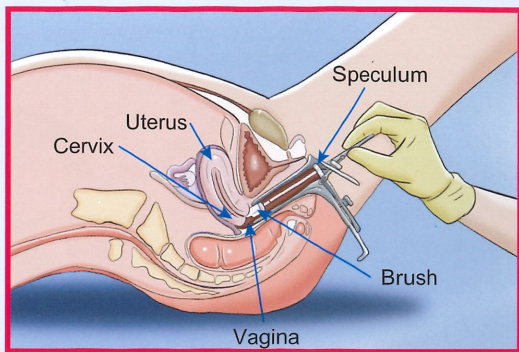
- Blood test, X-ray and different kinds of scan

To define the affected areas and to decide on the most suitable treatment.

How to prevent cervical cancer ?

The following may help prevent cervical cancer :

- **Quit smoking**
- **Maintain hygiene during sexual contact.** Practise safe sex to prevent sexually transmitted infections and to lower the chance for HPV infection.
- **Have regular Pap smear test**
 - If your first cervical smear result is normal, you should have the second smear 1 year later. If your second smear result is also normal, you should repeat smears every 3 years. For women with multiple sex partners, it is better to have the test every year.
 - If you have any symptom (such as abnormal vaginal bleeding), you should see a doctor promptly, even if your last smear result was normal.

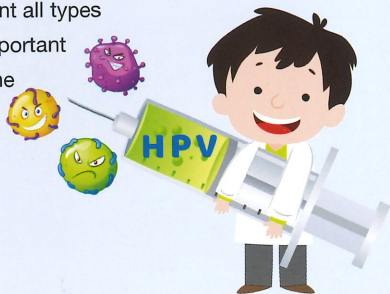


- HPV Vaccination

- Currently, the most common HPV vaccination is 9-valent. Basic information is as follows:

Vaccine	9-valent
Against HPV	HPV 6, 11, 16, 18, 31, 33, 45, 52, 58
Indicated age and diseases prevention caused by related HPV	From 9 years old (female or male). Can prevent cervical cancer and genital warts.
Common side effects	Pain, swelling, redness, itching, bruising, bleeding, and a lump where you got the shot, headache, fever, nausea, dizziness, tiredness, diarrhea, abdominal pain, and sore throat.
Dosage and schedule	For the 3-dose schedule, the second shot should be given 2 months after the first shot and the third shot should be given 6 months after the first shot.
Price (reference only)	HK\$1000-HK\$2000 per shot
Caution	HPV vaccination is not recommended for use in pregnant women.

- ** HPV vaccine does not prevent all types of cervical cancer, so it is important for women to continue routine cervical cancer screenings. HPV vaccine does not treat cancer or genital warts.



Pap Smear Test ?

Action for REACH OUT

AFRO provides free screening tests for HIV and Syphilis for female sex workers in Hong Kong (rapid test result available in 10 minutes.) We also provide free Pap smear tests and tests for Gonorrhea and Chlamydia (charged). There is no need to provide your identification document and all information will be kept strictly confidential. Enquiry and appointment: 27701002

Department of Health

Maternal and Child Health Centres provide cervical smear test to women aged at or above 25 who have ever had sex.

Cost: HK\$100 (eligible persons), HK\$205 (non-eligible persons)

24-hour hotline: 3166 6631

Reference:

Department of Health, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region -- Cervical Screening Programme
<http://www.cervicalscreening.gov.hk/eindex.php>

Cancer Fund -- Dual Protection. Lifelong Prevention
<http://www.cancer-fund.org/en/cervical-cancer.html>

If you have any enquiries, please feel free to contact us by calling our 24-hour hotline 27701002 or via the following mobile apps:



AFRO 2770 1002 9669 8108

Mon to Fri, 9 a.m. – 10 p.m.

24-Hour Hotline

2770 1002



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