

# Awareness About HPV & Cervical Dysplasia

**HPV is of increasing public health importance in the United States. The highest rates of infection occurs among young, sexually active women.**

- Because a means of prevention has not been found, doctors are actively studying HPV to offer more treatment options.
- Successful new treatments may help millions of women alleviate their conditions.
- Finding the right treatment for each patient can take some work. Many of the treatments currently available involve some drawbacks, such as pain, possible scarring, and expense.
- Cervical cancer is a major problem in many parts of the world. In fact, it is second to breast cancer as a cancer threat to women.
- Condoms prevent some cases of STDs, but they do not prevent HPV disease because they do not cover all places where skin to skin contact occurs.
- Thanks to ongoing research, there is more reassuring news about HPV and cervical dysplasia. Physicians and their patients are now able to make choices and decide on the best way to handle this annoying but manageable virus.



## Where Do I Go For More Information?

You may or may not benefit from participating in a clinical trial for HPV or prevention of cervical cancer.

During a clinical trial, patients are monitored very closely. Often they receive more intensive medical care than they do with standard care and treatment.

If you are interested in the option of experimental treatment, you should speak with our physician about participating in a clinical trial.



2125 South Neil Street  
Champaign, IL 61820-7266  
217-356-3736

<http://www.womenshealthpractice.com>

# HPV & Cervical Dysplasia

## GUIDANCE & CHOICES

## What You Need to Know

# Understanding HPV & Cervical Dysplasia

## HPV

The human papillomavirus, or HPV, is a virus. HPV can cause infections in a number of locations in the body.

It is estimated that 20-40 million Americans are infected with HPV. HPV infection is one of the most common sexually transmitted diseases in the country.

Some types of HPV can cause common skin warts. Other types can lead to genital warts. Certain HPV forms have been closely associated with the development of cervical cancer and other genital cancers.

## How Are HPV & Cervical Dysplasia Related?

HPV can cause abnormal Pap smears or cervical dysplasia. Cervical dysplasia is the growth of abnormal tissue on the cervix, the outermost portion of the uterus.

In the U.S., more than a million women are diagnosed and treated for cervical dysplasia every year.

- This condition is a risk factor for cervical cancer over time.
- However, progression to cervical cancer generally does not occur rapidly.

## How Will My Doctor Know If I Have Genital Warts or Cervical Dysplasia?

- **Visual Exam** — Genital warts are usually diagnosed by direct visual examination. Women who have genital warts should be examined for possible HPV infection.
- **Pap Smears** — Pap smears should be done regularly to provide early detection and proper treatment of cervical dysplasia. A Pap smear is a microscopic examination of cells taken from the cervix. New types of liquid-based Pap smears are now available. Not all insurance plans cover them.
- **HPV Tests** — Newly available tests can detect previous virus exposure.
- **Colposcopy** — Your doctor may also do a colposcopy. In this procedure, the doctor uses a magnifying instrument to view the vagina and cervix.
- **Biopsy** — In some cases, it might be necessary to do a biopsy. This involves taking a small sample of tissue and looking at it under the microscope.

## What Can Be Done to Treat HPV or Cervical Dysplasia?

### You Have a Choice

In many cases of cervical dysplasia, particularly milder ones, the problem can disappear on its own. A woman's condition improves naturally because of her body's own ability to fight infection. No drugs or surgical procedures are required. Still, many women with more severe forms must undergo treatment to eliminate the tissue.

### OPTION 1: Surgery

Most women treated for high-grade cervical dysplasia undergo a loop electrosurgical excisional procedure (LEEP).

- This surgery removes the abnormal tissue in most instances.
- However, surgery does not cure HPV. Cervical dysplasia can recur because the HPV virus remains present in the cervical tissue.

### OPTION 2: Medication

Doctors are now investigating new experimental, non-surgical treatments for HPV and cervical dysplasia. At this time, many of these treatments are undergoing clinical trials.

### OPTION 3: Vaccination

If HPV is prevented by getting a vaccination, you may avoid all the subsequent consequences.

Clinical trials allow doctors to study new drugs for illnesses in which they have the most promise for safe, effective treatment. The federal government requires such testing to regulate drugs.

- All clinical trials are supervised by qualified doctors.
- Before a drug enters clinical trials, it undergoes rigorous analysis and testing in the laboratory.

[www.womenshealthpractice.com](http://www.womenshealthpractice.com)