

## ACCESSING SCREENING SERVICES

VA offers comprehensive cervical cancer screening services to Veterans with a cervix who are enrolled in VA health care.

Pap and HPV tests are available directly through your VA Women's Health Primary Care Provider (WH-PCP). You do not need a referral for specialty care. You can conveniently schedule a cervical cancer screening exam as you would any VA health care appointment or discuss it with your primary care provider during your next visit.

We prioritize your comfort and preferences, and we always provide a medical chaperone.

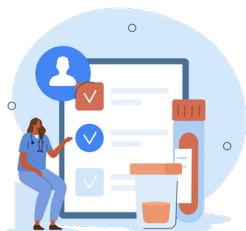
## ADDRESSING ABNORMAL RESULTS

In the event of abnormal screening results, your provider will let you know the next steps for potential additional screening. The presence of abnormal cells on a Pap test could indicate the need for more frequent screenings or treatments to remove those cells before they develop into cancer.

If your provider determines that you need to see a gynecologic specialist or an oncologist (cancer specialist), they can refer you to one at your VA medical center or a health care facility in your community. These specialists will work with you to develop a treatment and care plan.

## SCHEDULING AN APPOINTMENT FOR SCREENING

Contact your local VA medical center to make an appointment or use MyHealthVet. The Women Veterans Program Manager (WVPM) at your local VA medical center can also help you schedule your care or help arrange any screenings you need.



## Women Veterans Call Center

The Women Veterans Call Center (WVCC) is your guide to VA. All calls are answered by women, many of whom are Veterans themselves, who will help you navigate VA, answer your questions about VA services and benefits available to you, and connect you with the Women Veterans Program Manager at your local VA medical center. This service is free, and you can call as many times as you need.

Call or text us at 855-VA-WOMEN (855-829-6636). WVCC representatives are available Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. ET, and Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. ET. You can also chat with us online and learn more by visiting <https://www.womenshealth.va.gov>



**WOMEN VETERANS CALL CENTER**  
**855.VA.WOMEN**

### Am I Eligible for VA Health Care?

Everyone's situation is unique and so is their eligibility. To find out if you are eligible to enroll, visit <https://www.va.gov/health-care/eligibility>

### Apply Online or By Mail

Go to <https://www.va.gov/health-care/how-to-apply>

### Apply in Person

Visit the nearest VA medical center or clinic. You can locate your nearest VA health facility at <https://www.va.gov/find-locations>

### Apply by Phone

To apply for VA benefits you may have earned—such as preventative care, inpatient and urgent care services—call 1-877-222-8387

Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–8 p.m. ET.  
Veterans Benefits Administration 1-800-827-1000  
[www.vba.va.gov](http://www.vba.va.gov)

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## WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE

# CERVICAL CANCER SCREENING

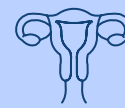
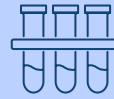


**VA**



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# CERVICAL CANCER SCREENING



## YOUR HEALTH MATTERS

As a woman Veteran, you have unique health needs that deserve attention.

Cervical cancer is the fourth most common cancer among women – and unfortunately, women Veterans have higher rates of risk factors for cervical cancer than non-Veteran women.

Cervical cancer is a type of gynecologic cancer that begins in the cervix, the lower part of the uterus connecting to the vagina. It usually grows slowly and is mainly caused by human papillomavirus (HPV).

Screening tests can help detect cervical cancer and other precancerous cells that may one day develop into cervical cancer. The goal of screening is to detect and treat precancerous cell changes before they develop into cancer. Cervical cancer found at an early stage is usually easier to treat.

## UNDERSTANDING CERVICAL CANCER

Cervical cancer is a significant health concern for women Veterans, and early detection through screening can make a significant difference in treatment outcomes. By understanding the risk factors and benefits of early detection, you can take proactive steps to protect your health.

Veterans assigned female at birth report cervical cancer risk factors at higher rates than non-Veterans. Some risk factors include:

- Smoking
- Multiple sexual partners
- Becoming sexually active at a young age
- HIV/weakened immune system
- HPV infection
- Past sexual assault

Cervical cancer or precancerous cells can be detected by screening. Screening can be performed through:

- Pap test (also known as a Pap smear)
- Human Papillomavirus (HPV) testing
- Both together

The Pap and HPV tests are collected during a pelvic exam.



## AVAILABLE SCREENING METHODS

Pap tests are a critical tool in detecting cervical cancer and precancerous cells. Additionally, screening for HPV can further enhance early detection efforts.

**Women aged 21-29** should have a Pap test every three years.

**Women aged 30-65** have several options:

1. A Pap and HPV test together (called co-testing) every five years
2. A test for human papillomavirus (HPV), the virus that causes cervical cancer, every five years
3. A Pap test every three years

## UNDERSTANDING PAP TESTS

The Pap test can show precancerous cells that can be removed before the onset of cancer.

### Pap tests check for:

- Cervical cancer
- Potentially precancerous cells in the cervix
- For women over 30, we also check for HPV at the same time as the Pap test. HPV is a common sexually transmitted infection (STI) that increases the risk of cervical cancer.

## HPV VACCINE

The HPV vaccine, which protects against certain types of human papillomavirus (HPV) that can cause cancer, is recommended for those under age 26. If you are over 26, you may still be able to receive an HPV vaccine. Discuss the vaccine with your health care provider to see if it is right for you.

