

**11 What if my test results are abnormal?**

An abnormal Pap test result does not necessarily mean something serious. When found early, most abnormalities can be treated. Abnormalities are typically classed as low grade or high grade. Low grade abnormalities signify minor changes to the cells and they usually disappear on their own. High grade abnormalities represent more serious cell changes and have a greater probability of progressing to cancer. If abnormal results are obtained, your doctor can follow up immediately with whatever treatment is best for you.

**12 Why should I ask for a ThinPrep Pap test?**

The ThinPrep Pap test is the first significant improvement to the conventional Pap smear in over 50 years. Improved sample preparation means fewer revisits to the doctor and increased disease detection offers you greater confidence in the diagnosis. Additionally, further tests can be run if required. The ThinPrep Pap test provides you with a new level of assurance in the accuracy of your results.

**13 Can I be tested for HPV?**

Yes, there are tests available but currently they would be at your own expense unless you are under treatment for a pre-existing condition of the cervix.<sup>7</sup> If your doctor recommends an HPV test with your Pap test, both can be taken from your ThinPrep Pap test sample. However for infections that persist, Pap testing and HPV testing when recommended are the surest method of detection.



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1. Davey E, *et al.* Accuracy of reading liquid based cytology slides using the ThinPrep Imager compared with conventional cytology: prospective study. *British Medical Journal*. 2007;335(7609):28. 2. Roberts J.M. *et al.* A Three-Armed Trial of the ThinPrep Imaging System. *Diagnostic Cytopathology*, vol. 35, no. 2, 96-102, 2007. 3. The link between cervical cancer and HPV (human papillomavirus) booklet. National Cervical Screening Program. 4. American Cancer Society. Guideline for Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine Use to Prevent Cervical Cancer and Its Precursors. Available: <http://caonline.amcancersoc.org/cgi/content/full/57/1/7>. Accessed 9/2/08. 5. Hutchinson M.L. *et al.* Homogenous Sampling Accounts for the Increased Diagnostic Accuracy Using the ThinPrep Processor *Am J Clin Path*. 101:215-219, 1994. 6. Data on file with Hologic, Inc. 7. Screening to Prevent Cervical Cancer. Guidelines for the Management of Women With Screen Detected Abnormalities. NHMRC June 2005.



What every woman  
should know

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THE MORE EFFECTIVE PAP TEST<sup>1,2</sup>

# Cervical Screening

Be prepared. Get the facts.

## 1 What is cervical cancer?

Cervical cancer develops from abnormal cells in the cervix. It is the second-leading cause of cancer among women worldwide. However, it is highly preventable due in large part to routine Pap testing. The majority of cervical cancers are linked to human papillomavirus (HPV), but other risk factors may also contribute.

## 2 What is HPV?

HPV or human papillomavirus is an extremely common virus – as many as four-in-five people will become infected with genital HPV at some time in their lives, although most do not develop cervical cancer.<sup>3</sup> HPV is a group of over 100 virus types transmitted by skin-to-skin contact. Most HPV infections clear on their own, however a few ‘high-risk’ types, if persistent, may develop into cervical cancer.<sup>4</sup>

## 3 What is a Pap test?

The Pap test or Pap smear is a screening test designed to detect signs of cervical cancer or cells that may turn into cancer cells in the future. It was introduced over 50 years ago and has been the single greatest contributor to the overall decline in cervical cancer. There are two types of Pap tests in Australia – the conventional Pap smear and a newer test known as liquid-based cytology, such as the ThinPrep® Pap test.

## 4 Why should I have a Pap test?

You can have cell changes in your cervix without experiencing any symptoms or pain. If these are not treated, even small changes in cells can become serious over time.

## 5 Who should have a Pap test?

All women who have ever been sexually active need to have regular Pap tests every 2 years. Even if you are not sexually active now or no longer have periods, you still need to have regular Pap tests.

## 6 How is the conventional Pap smear done?

A doctor or nurse gently scrapes cells from your cervix. With the conventional Pap smear method, the cells are smeared directly onto a glass slide and sent to a laboratory for review under a microscope.

Learn about the latest technology that offers you a better test.

## 7 Is there room for improvement for the Pap smear?

Yes! The smearing action used to transfer the cells to the glass slide can cause uneven layering, crowding and overlapping of cells, making a correct diagnosis difficult at times. Additionally research shows up to 80% of cell material may not transfer to the slide and may actually be discarded with the sampling device.<sup>5</sup>

## 8 How is the ThinPrep Pap test different?

The cells are collected in the same way as the conventional smear. However the cells are rinsed into a vial filled with a preservative solution. The vial is then sent to a laboratory where it is processed and a representative thin layer of cells is placed on the slide for review under a microscope. The ThinPrep process improves the quality of the sample, preparing a slide that helps the laboratory professional make a more accurate diagnosis.<sup>6</sup>

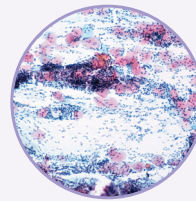
## 9 Is there proof that the ThinPrep Pap test is more effective?

Yes. Australian clinical research shows the ThinPrep Pap test used with the ThinPrep Imaging System is **27% more effective** at detecting high-grade abnormalities and **56% more effective** at detecting low-grade abnormalities than the conventional Pap smear.<sup>1</sup>

## 10 I've had the vaccine, do I still need a Pap test?

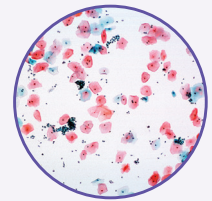
Yes. Regular Pap tests remain critically important as the HPV vaccine does not protect against all types of cancer-causing HPV and the Pap test remains the only way to check for abnormal cells of the cervix.

CONVENTIONAL SLIDE



**Difficult to visualise:** Up to 80% of cells collected may not make it to the slide. The cells can appear overlapped and crowded.<sup>5</sup>

THINPREP SLIDE



**Clear and more effective:** Virtually all cells are collected and a clearer slide is created which improves the detection of cervical disease.<sup>6</sup>