

Cervical Cancer Screening With the HPV Self-Collection Test



This document provides answers to questions about HPV (human papillomavirus) self-collection testing for women and people with a cervix for cervical cancer screening.

Why is cervical cancer screening with an HPV test important?

HPV is common. Most people will get it during their life. It usually clears with time, but when the infection is not cleared by the body, it can cause changes in cells that can lead to cervical cancer. Regular screening can help prevent cervical cancer by finding changes caused by HPV and, if needed, treating the changes.

What is the HPV self-collection test?

The HPV self-collection test is a safe and effective new screening option. The Food and Drug Administration has approved HPV self-collection testing. Instead of a health care professional doing a pelvic exam to collect your sample from your cervix, you collect a sample from your vagina.

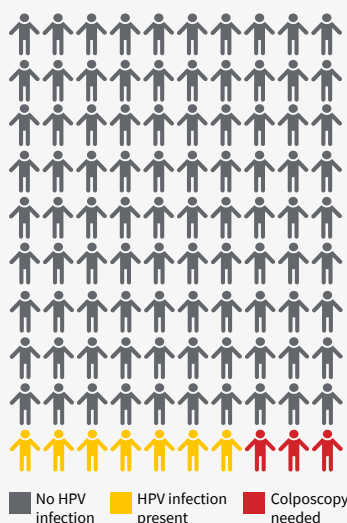
Sometimes, people do not want their health care provider to do a pelvic exam for reasons such as trouble getting on the exam table, pain with the exam, or a history of sexual trauma. HPV self-collection testing provides a way to screen without an exam.

How does it work?

The test is easy to do. You will get instructions before you start, as each test is a little different. To collect your sample, you insert the device into your vagina, turn it, and then take it out. After collecting the sample, it is sent to the lab for HPV testing.

Is it accurate?

HPV self-collection works as well as samples collected by a health care provider. It is available in many countries around the world.



What can I expect from HPV test results?

- Most people (~ 90 out of 100) will have no HPV infection. HPV testing should be repeated every 3 years.
- Some people (~ 7 out of 100) have an HPV infection present that needs a follow-up examination and Pap test with a health care provider to guide next steps.
- A few people (~ 3 out of 100) will need a colposcopy. Colposcopy is when a provider takes a closer look at your cervix and takes samples of tissue (biopsy) to guide next steps.

Source: Egemen D, Cheung LC, Chen X, et al. Risk Estimates Supporting the 2019 ASCCP Risk-Based Management Consensus Guidelines. *J Low Genit Tract Dis.* 2020;24(2):132-143. doi:10.1097/LGT.0000000000000529.

Are there advantages to collection by a health care provider?

There may be a less frequent need for screening when a health care provider collects your sample for primary HPV testing instead of you doing self-collection. If a health care provider collects the sample for an HPV test, they can also use the same cells from the cervix to do a Pap test if needed.

For a self-collected sample, it cannot be used for a Pap test because the cells are from the vagina, and not the cervix. Therefore, you will need a follow-up visit and pelvic exam if your HPV test is positive.

Can anyone choose HPV self-collection testing?

Many people can choose self-collection for primary HPV testing. You should have a pelvic exam if you have symptoms such as abnormal uterine bleeding. Talk with your health care provider to find out if your clinic offers HPV self-collection testing and if you are eligible.

For more information on HPV testing, scan the QR codes or visit the websites listed.



Visit the American Cancer Society website at cancer.org.



Visit the American Cancer Society National Roundtable on Cervical Cancer website at cervicalroundtable.org.