



Cervical Screening **Wales**  
Sgrinio Serfigol **Cymru**



**GIG**  
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Easy Read



# Having a smear test and testing for a virus called HPV



[www.cervicalscreeningwales.wales.nhs.uk](http://www.cervicalscreeningwales.wales.nhs.uk)

Version 1: March 18

# How to use this leaflet



This is an Easy Read leaflet.  
The words are easy to read and understand.



You may need help and support to read and understand this leaflet. Ask someone you know to help you.



This leaflet was made by Public Health Wales and Learning Disability Wales.



This booklet is available in Welsh.

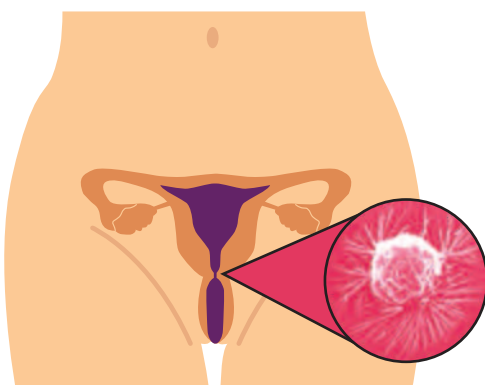
# 1. What is this leaflet about?



This leaflet is about a health test for women called a smear test.



A smear test will test for a **virus** called human papillomavirus. It is also known as **HPV**.

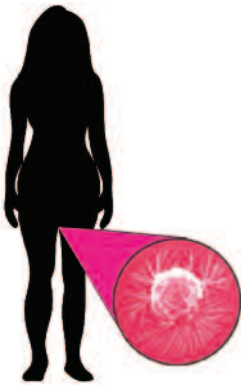


A virus can make you ill.

Some viruses can be serious and cause cancer.

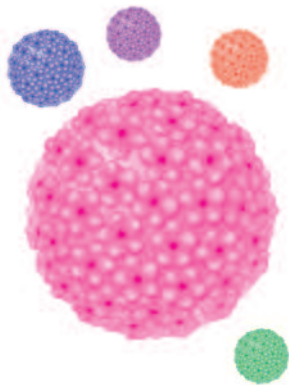
HPV can cause **cancer**.

## 2. What is HPV?



HPV is the main cause of cervical cancer.

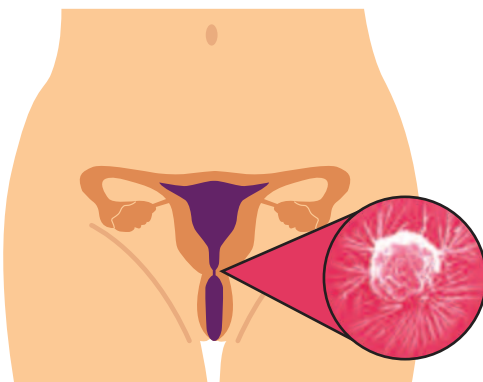
Cervical cancer is cancer of the cervix.



There are lots of different types of the HPV virus.

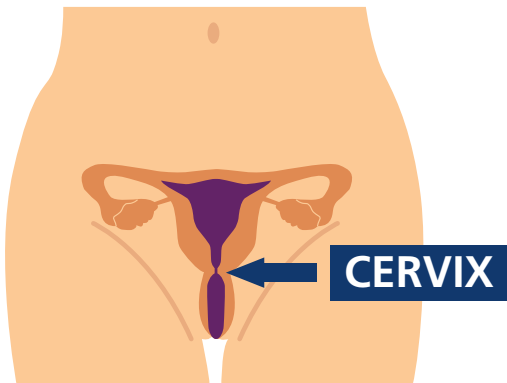


Some types are not serious and will not make you ill.



Some types of HPV are serious and can cause cervical cancer.

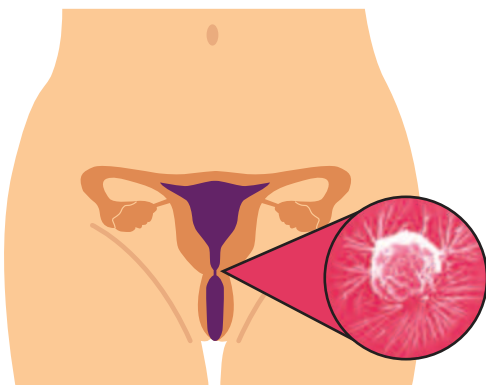
### 3. What is cervical cancer?



The **cervix** is inside your body at the top of your vagina.



Some types of HPV can cause **cells** in your cervix to change.



If the changes in the cells are left for a long time and not treated, you can get cervical cancer.



## 4. How can I get HPV?

You can get HPV from:



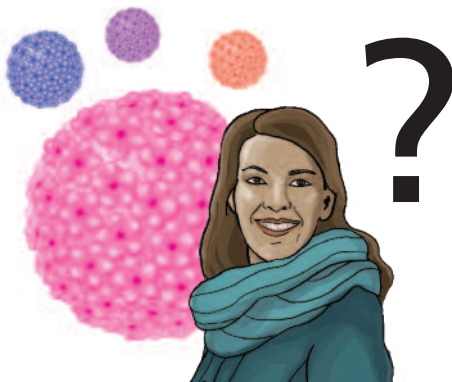
Any kind of sex with a man or a woman.



Any kind of sexual touching with a man or a woman.



Most women will get HPV at some time in their lives.



You might not know if you have HPV.

## 5. Things you need to know about HPV



You might feel well even though you have HPV. You might not notice any changes to your body.



Most of the time you will not need any treatment for HPV as your body will get rid of the virus.



The only way to find out if you have serious types of HPV and if your cervix is healthy is to have a test.

This test is called **cervical screening**. You may know it as a **smear test**.

## 6. Having a smear test



All women between **25 and 64 years** old will be invited for a smear test.



If you are between **25 and 49 years** old you will be invited for a smear test every **3 years**.



If you are between **50 and 64 years** old you will be invited for a smear test every **5 years**.



When you are due for a smear test you will be sent a letter in the post.



## 6. Having a smear test



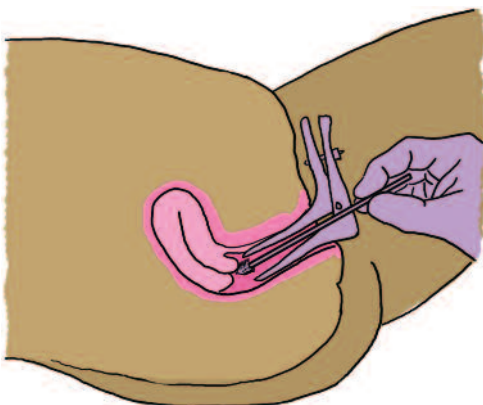
The letter will ask you to make an appointment.

You can ask for a longer appointment.



You can have your smear test at your doctors surgery, or at some clinics.

You can ask to have the test taken by a woman.



A smear test is when a doctor or nurse takes a sample of cells from your cervix.

## 6. Having a smear test



It is normal to feel scared or embarrassed. Tell your nurse or doctor how you feel.



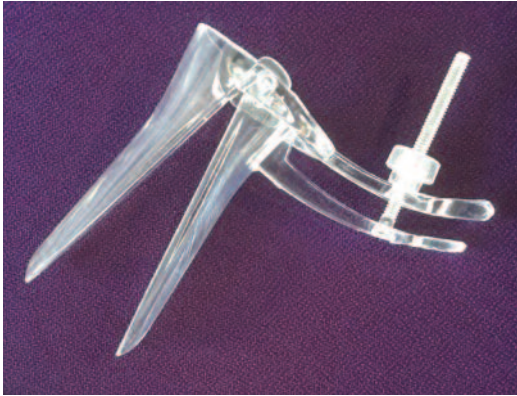
You can go on your own, or you can go with a family member, friend or support worker.



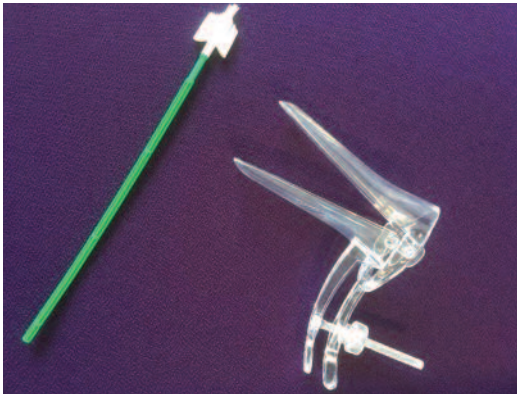
The nurse or doctor will ask you to take off your knickers.

You will need to lie on the couch.

## 6. Having a smear test



The doctor or nurse will use a special instrument to open your vagina so she can see your cervix.



The doctor or nurse will use a small brush to take a sample of cells from your cervix.



It should not be painful.  
It might be uncomfortable.  
You can **stop** the test at anytime.



The sample is tested to see if you have HPV.

If you have HPV, your cells will be checked for changes.

## 7. What happens if I do not have HPV?



You will get a letter in the post with your smear test result.

The letter will tell most women they do not have HPV.



Normal cells

If you do not have HPV, it is **unlikely** that the cells on your cervix will change.



You will be sent another letter in **3 or 5 years** time inviting you for a smear test.



## 8. What happens if I have HPV?



The result letter will tell some women that they have HPV.

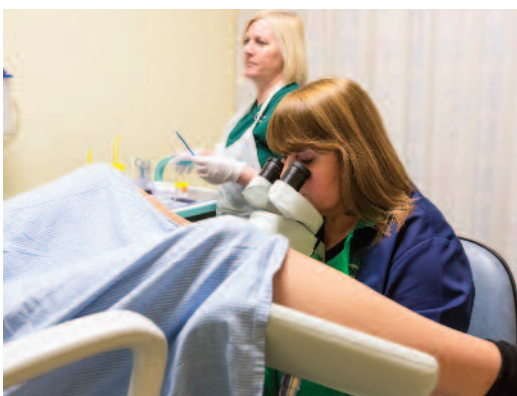


If you have HPV, you may need to have your smear test again in a year.



If you have HPV and your cells have changed, you will need a **hospital** appointment.

Your cervix will be looked at closely. This is called a colposcopy.



You may need treatment to remove the cells that have been changed by HPV.

You will be given information and support at this time.

## 9. HPV injection for girls



Girls between **12** and **13** years old are offered an **injection** (jab) that helps to stop them getting serious types of HPV.

You may have had this injection when you were younger.



You still need to go for a smear test from the age of 25 even if you have had the HPV injection.

## 10. What can I do to keep healthy?



You should go for a smear test when you are invited.



You should go for any hospital appointments when you are invited.



Stop smoking. There is more chance you will get cervical cancer if you smoke.



You can get free help to support you to stop smoking.

You can ring **Help Me Quit** on:

 **0800 085 2219**

You can speak to us in Welsh or English

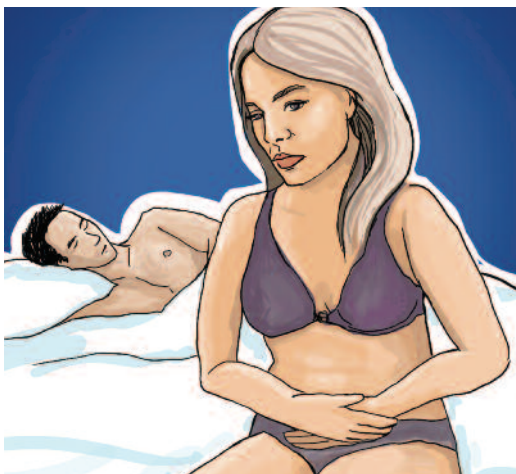
## 11. Changes to look out for:



Bleeding when it is not your period.



Bleeding after your **menopause** (when your periods have stopped).



Pain during or after having sex.



## 11. Changes to look out for:



Bleeding during or after having sex.



Any unusual discharge from your vagina.

**If you notice any of these changes tell your doctor.**

## 12. Where can I get more information?



Talk to your doctor or nurse.



Talk to your family, support worker or social worker.



Phone Cervical Screening Wales.



Contact Cervical Screening Wales by visiting our website.

## 13. Contact us



Cervical Screening **Wales**  
Sgrinio Serfigol **Cymru**

Local Cervical Screening Wales offices:

**South East Wales:**

**☎ 029 2078 7910**

**Mid and West Wales:**

**☎ 01792 940 940**

**North Wales:**

**☎ 01352 803 277**

You can speak to us in Welsh or English. You can also visit the website.

**💻 [www.cervicalscreeningwales.wales.nhs.uk](http://www.cervicalscreeningwales.wales.nhs.uk)**

**For more information and support about cervical cancer contact:**



**☎ 020 3096 8100**

**💻 [www.jostrust.org.uk](http://www.jostrust.org.uk)**

# Acknowledgements:

The images in this leaflet are from Photosymbols,  
Inspired Services and Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust.

Thanks to the following organisations who have helped to  
make this easy read booklet:

