Human Papillomavirus (HPV):
- HPV is a very common virus which most women get at some time in their life.
- Many types of HPV affect the genital area. They can be divided into:
  - low-risk genital HPV — do not cause cervical cancer but can cause other problems such as genital warts
  - high-risk genital HPV — can cause changes to the cells of the cervix (neck of the womb) which can develop into cervical cancer. These changes are known as Cervical Intraepithelial Neoplasia (CIN)

HPV Testing
- Regular screening (smear) tests can pick up cell changes on the cervix caused by high-risk HPV.
- There is a test for high-risk HPV that looks for the virus in the cells of the cervix. This test is carried out using the same sample of cells taken during your cervical smear test.

A test will be carried out:
- when a woman’s screening result shows mild changes
- for some women who have been referred to a colposcopy clinic
- for women who have been treated for CIN
- If HPV is not found you will be invited for screening again in three or five years time as you would be at low risk of developing cell changes in your cervix.
- If HPV is found you may be at a higher risk of cell changes and you will be referred to a colposcopy clinic

More information about HPV
- Anyone who has ever been sexually active can be infected with HPV. Four out of five (80%) people will be infected with genital HPV at some time during their lives.
- Although there is no treatment for HPV, the body’s immune system usually clears the infection without any harm being done.
- HPV is easily transmitted between men and women and between same-sex partners through skin-to-skin contact. You are still at risk of getting HPV even if you do not have penetrative sex.
- The high-risk virus shows no symptoms, which means that people who have the infection don’t know they have it. Someone may have had HPV for many years without knowing about it.
- A partner may have been infected years earlier but be unaware of it.
- In some women the body doesn’t clear the infection and this is when abnormalities of the cervix can develop into cancer if not treated

What you can do:
- Go for your screening (smear) test every time you are invited.
- Stop smoking, as smoking increases your risk of getting cervical cancer.

To find out more visit:
www.cervicalscreeningwales.wales.nhs.uk or talk to your practice nurse or GP
www.stopsmokingwales.com STOP SMOKING WALES – 0800 085 2219

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