



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