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Combined HPV and Pap Testing Better Predict Risk of Cervical Cancer [1]

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A large study on combining human papillomavirus (HPV) and Pap testing for regular cervical cancer screening showed that it is safe for women to have cervical cancer screening every three years instead of every year. The study also showed that HPV testing identified more women at high risk for cervical cancer than Pap testing. HPV, a virus most commonly passed from person to person during sexual activity, is a major risk factor for cervical cancer.

The 331,818 women in this study were 30 and older and received both HPV and Pap testing so researchers could determine how well each test predicted a women's risk of cervical cancer. Women who tested HPV positive (meaning the virus was found) had a higher risk of developing a cervical cancer or precancer within five years than women with an abnormal Pap test. Women whose tests were HPV negative (meaning the virus was not found) had a very low risk of cervical cancer, with nearly 4 women per 100,000 developing cervical cancer each year. Women who had both a normal Pap test and tested negative for HPV had an even lower cancer risk, with around 3 women per 100,000 developing cervical cancer each year.

What this means for patients

“Our results confirm that the three-year follow-up is appropriate and safe for women who have a negative HPV test and a normal Pap test,” said lead author Hormuzd Katki, PhD, principal investigator in the Division of Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics at the National Cancer Institute.

Questions to ask your doctor

- What is my risk of cervical cancer?
- How often should I receive screening for cervical cancer?
- Is an HPV test done with my Pap test?
- What do the results of my Pap test/HPV test mean? If the results indicate there might be cancer, what are the next steps?
- Am I able to have the HPV vaccine? If I have a daughter, should she receive the vaccine?

For More Information

[Guide to Cervical Cancer](#) [2]

[HPV and Cancer](#) [3]

[HPV Vaccination for Cervical Cancer](#) [4]

[Pap Test - What to Expect](#) [5]

[Cancer Screening](#) [6]

Links:

[1] <http://www.cancer.net/combined-hpv-and-pap-testing-better-predict-risk-cervical-cancer>

[2] <http://www.cancer.net/patient/Cancer+Types/Cervical+Cancer>

[3] <http://www.cancer.net/patient/All+About+Cancer/Cancer.Net+Feature+Articles/Cancer+Screening+and+Prevention/HPV+and+C>

[4] <http://www.cancer.net/patient/All+About+Cancer/Cancer.Net+Feature+Articles/Cancer+Screening+and+Prevention/ASCO+Expe>

[5] <http://www.cancer.net/patient/All+About+Cancer/Cancer.Net+Feature+Articles/Cancer+Screening+and+Prevention/Pap+Test%2>

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