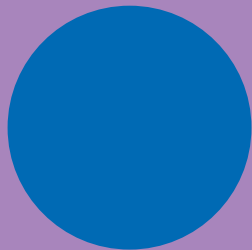
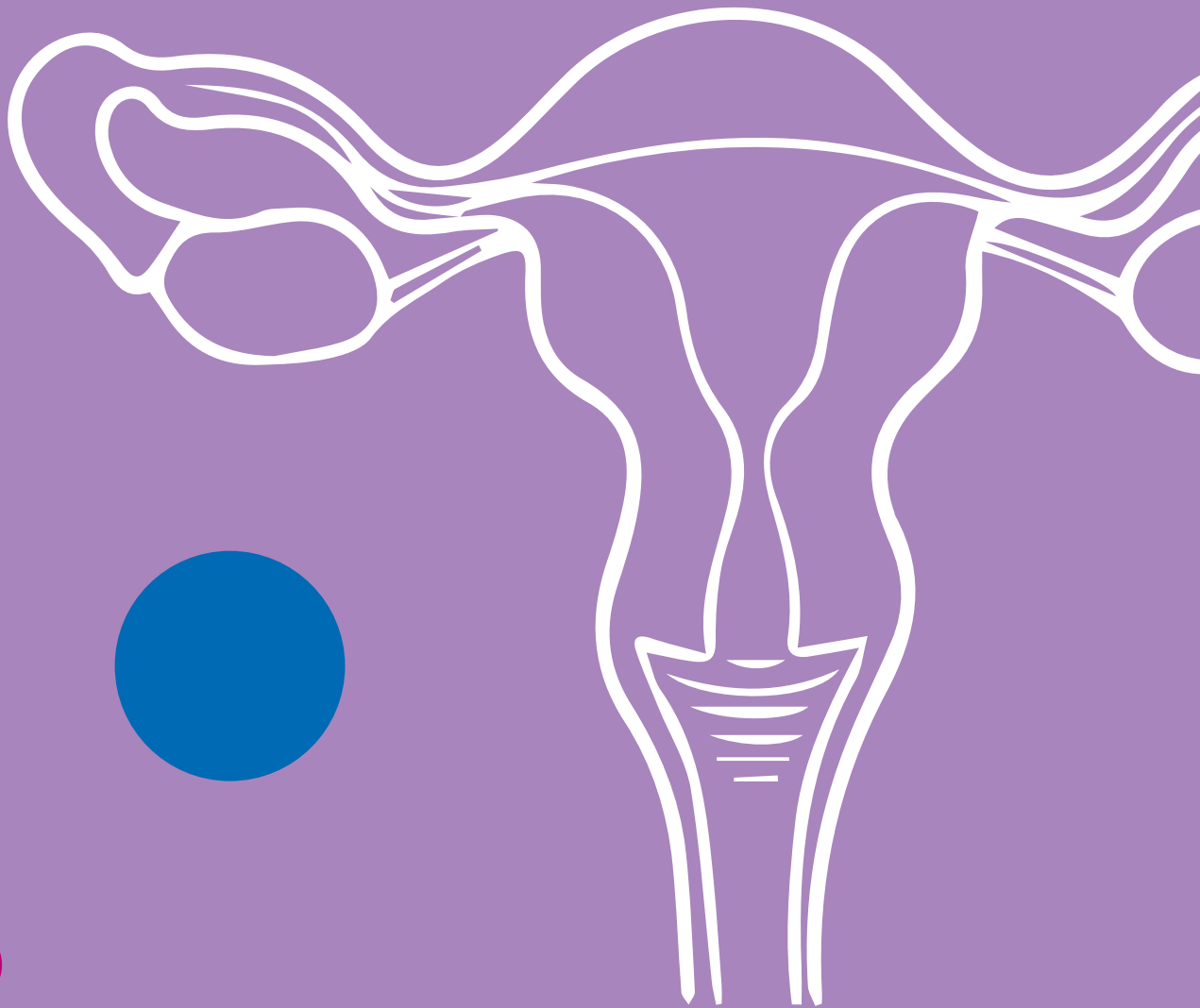




North Cambridgeshire &
Peterborough Care Partnership

Cervical Screening





Contents

What is cervical screening and why is it important?	Page 3
Who can support you	Page 9
Reasonable adjustments	Page 10
Decision making support	Page 13
Resources	Page 14



What is cervical screening and why is it important?

What is the aim of cervical screening?

The aim of cervical screening is to check the health of your cervix by taking a small sample of cells. It tests for Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), a virus which can cause cell changes at the cervix.

What does cervical screening involve?

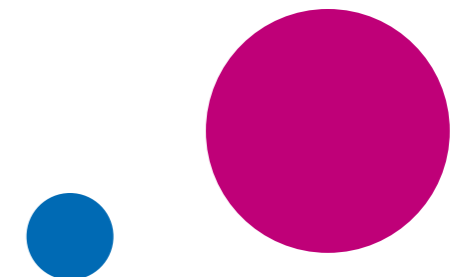
Cervical screening involves taking a small sample of cells from the cervix. The test looks for HPV, as this could mean a higher chance of cervical cancer developing.

Who is invited for cervical screening?

Cervical screening is available to people aged 25 to 64.

If you are registered with a GP, you should receive an invite in the NHS App or by post every five years between ages 25 - 64 years. If you have previously tested positive for HPV, you may be invited earlier. The screening is usually done in your GP surgery or could be done at a sexual health clinic.

If you are 65 or older you will no longer receive invites in the NHS App or through the post, however, if you have any abnormal symptoms or concerns you should contact your GP.





What is cervical screening and why is it important?

Why should I have my cervical screening?

Screening can help prevent cancer. It checks for early signs of cancer even before you notice any symptoms.

It can also prevent cervical cancer by detecting non-cancerous growths (polyps), which might develop into cancer if left untreated.

How does a cervical screening test work?

The sample is tested for HPV in a laboratory in Norwich. If the virus is detected then the cytologist will look at your cells for any changes or abnormalities.



What is cervical screening and why is it important?

What could the results of the screening be?

Your results will usually be sent to you in the NHS App or by post in two to four weeks.

A negative result - this means that there was no HPV found and your cervical cancer risk is low. You will be reinvited in five years.

An HPV positive result with negative cytology - this means you have HPV but the cells look healthy close up so to give the virus a chance to clear, you will be reinvited in 12 months.

An HPV positive result with cell changes - this means you have HPV and the cells seen had some abnormalities meaning they need to be looked at more closely by a Colposcopist at a hospital. This doesn't necessarily mean cancer has been seen.

An inadequate result - this means there are not enough cells taken so you will need to repeat the screening after three months.

A normal result does not guarantee that you do not have, or will never get cervical cancer. You should continue to look out for any symptoms of cervical cancer and complete your next screening when you are invited.

87 people in 100 get a normal result.
13 people in 100 get a HPV-positive result.
9 people in those 13 are recalled in 12 months.
4 people in those 13 get called to colposcopy.

HPV is very common, and most people will get the virus at some point in their lifetime. The body should clear it within one to two years.



What is cervical screening and why is it important?

What are the benefits and risks of cervical screening?

Screening is the best way to catch cervical cancer changes early and taking part in screening reduces your risk. It can also identify other cervical conditions.

Despite the very small risks, it is recommended that everyone who is eligible to have a cervical screening does so. The programme is designed to save lives and is recognised for its success. Without it, more people would develop and die of cervical cancer each year.

The risks of removing abnormal cells can include bleeding, infection and affecting future pregnancies. People who get pregnant after having abnormal cells removed are not at increased risk of having their baby early if they have standard treatment. If more cervical tissue needs to be removed then there is a slight increased risk of having a baby 1 or 2 months early.

Not everyone who has abnormal cells removed will go on to develop cervical cancer. We cannot tell who would and who wouldn't, that's why we offer treatment to everyone with abnormal cells.



What is cervical screening and why is it important?

Can I help someone I care for attend a cervical screening?

If you care for someone who needs assistance and if they give you permission to, you can help them attend screening if they understand the screening process.

Speak to a GP or nurse if someone does not have the capacity to give their consent - for example, if they:

- do not understand the screening process
- are unable to make a decision about being screened
- are unable to communicate their wishes.

Their GP or nurse will have access to their medical records and knowledge of their overall medical health. They can advise you about what may be in their best interests.





What is cervical screening and why is it important?

What happens to samples after testing?

Once the sample is analysed, we record the result on to a database called Cervical Screening Management System (CSMS). We keep the database information so we can check you are treated and invited correctly. We also use it to monitor the performance of the cervical screening programme.

What are the symptoms of cervical cancer that I should look out for?

- Bleeding between your periods
- Bleeding during or after sexual intercourse
- Bleeding after the menopause
- Changes to vaginal discharge
- Pain during sexual intercourse
- Pain in your lower back, between your hip bones (pelvis), or in your lower tummy.

Remember these symptoms can be caused by other conditions, not just cancer. But if you do have any of these symptoms or anything else that is not normal for you, go to see your GP. They can examine you and do further tests if necessary.



Support for people with a learning disability

Although this pack provides lots of information about cervical screening, we know that for people with a learning disability extra support might be needed.

Support is available for people with a diagnosed learning disability who need additional support for routine screening, through The Learning Disability Partnership. For people invited to their cervical screening appointment the team can offer advice regarding capacity and best interests, on how to make reasonable adjustments and desensitisation support to the individual themselves.



Desensitisation work can take time as we look at what screening is required, starting with easy read information and listening to the individual to hear their concerns and fears. We make links with the screening department/GP surgery and arrange to support the individual to visit the unit before the procedure, meet the staff and become familiar with the environment. We also have examples of the equipment used so we can talk through the screening in the comfort of the individual's own home. We also support at the actual appointment if this is required.

"It is recommended that people are not removed from the screening programme but their best interests are assessed at each call up if they do not have capacity."

Anne Hunt, Senior Lead LeDeR (Local Area Contact) & Health Inequalities, Learning Disability and Autism Programme, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care System

To refer a person to the learning disability service you can telephone the contact centre on 0345 045 5202, 9am – 5pm from Monday to Friday. For more information please visit: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/adults/support-for-sight-and-hearing-loss-and-disabilities/learning-disability-partnership>



Reasonable adjustments

Here are some things you can ask for or you can do during your appointments which may make cervical screening easier and more comfortable for you:



Arrange to speak to the practice nurse before your appointment. Then you can meet them and get to know them and ask any questions you have.



Ask for a longer (or double) appointment.



Take someone with you. This can be anyone who you trust and feel comfortable with.



You can wear something to make you feel more covered up during your appointment. You will need to remove your underwear to have cervical screening done but wearing a long top or a dress or skirt can help you feel less exposed.



You can bring music to listen to or something to read while the nurse is taking the cervical screening.



Pre-screening questionnaire - you will find this on page 11 of this pack. It is a list of reasons why you might be putting off having your cervical screening. If it would be helpful for you, you can tick any of the options which apply to you and hand the questionnaire to the nurse or doctor carrying out your cervical screening. The nurse or doctor can then chat more about this with you and do what they can to help you feel more relaxed about the appointment.

Pre-Screening Questionnaire

Cervical screening: extra support required



Dear nurse, some things listed on this page may affect my experience. I may need extra support (*tick any boxes that describe your situation*)

- I have a mental health condition
- My medication makes me shake
- I find it hard to leave my house
- I sometimes find it hard to process information
- I don't like to feel exposed or naked
- I am embarrassed about my body
- I have scars
- I feel judged
- I feel like a burden
- I am afraid it will hurt
- I may start to cry or freeze up
- I may pass out or faint
- I may have a panic attack
- I get distressed during a physical examination
- I have had a bad cervical screening experience
- I have experienced trauma
- I am a survivor of sexual violence
- I am a survivor of female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C)
- I want to be warned before the nurse touches me
- Waiting rooms make my symptoms worse
- These words can trigger attacks or flashbacks (please list those words here):

.....
 Other

If you have any other comments, please add them below:

.....
.....

Further copies are available online - https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fassets.publishing.service.gov.uk%2Fmedia%2F65f08a0d9812270011f61400%2FCervical_screening_extra_support_checklist_120324.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK



Decision making support

Although cervical screening is recommended for everybody with a cervix, we understand that there may be some people who do not want to have the test done or cannot put themselves through having the test done. This information pack is not designed to force anyone into having something done that they truly do not want. We want to give you all the information you need to make an informed decision on whether cervical screening is the right thing for you, and we will support you through that decision making process as best we can.

All the support you have read about in this booklet is available to you, even if you decide that you do not want to have the test done. If it is something you are not sure about having done, the nurse or doctor will still be able to see you to have a chat and show you all the equipment. Everything possible will be done to provide you with the information you need to make that decision.





Resources

Hopefully this pack will be a helping hand in deciding whether cervical screening is right for you. We have included a few links to some videos and helpful web pages below which you may find helpful alongside the information within this pack.

Cervical screening: general information

Videos explaining cervical screening in multiple languages, answers to FAQs, and practical information about what to expect.

cpics.org.uk/cervical-screening/

Cervical screening: how it's done (NHS)

Short NHS video showing what happens during a cervical screening test.

youtube.com/watch?v=OU7fZb_sTus

Accessing cervical screening with the right support for people with a learning disability

Guidance for people with a learning disability on attending cervical screening.

youtube.com/watch?v=zOq_a2BYERc

An easy-read guide to cervical screening

Step-by-step visual guide to cervical screening in easy-read format.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/687a4b02a8ee0c6e06f4529b/CSP05_easy_guide_to_cervical_screening_July_25.pdf



Beyond Words cervical screening picture story

A word-free picture story to support understanding and discussion about cervical screening.

<https://www.booksbeyondwords.co.uk/resources-dl>

Cervical screening: support for people who feel anxious about attending

Practical advice, tips, and reassurance for anyone who feels nervous or finds it difficult to attend cervical screening.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cervical-screening-support-for-people-who-find-it-hard-to-attend/cervical-screening-support-for-people-who-feel-anxious-about-attending>

Making decisions: a guide for family, friends, and other unpaid carers

Explains how to support decision-making for those who need help understanding cervical screening choices.

youtube.com/watch?v=uiZ-ykfP7sA





We wanted to thank the Suffolk GP Federation teams and #VeryImportantInivation for developing the original version of this toolkit. Their support and generosity have enabled this Cambridgeshire and Peterborough version to be developed in collaboration with Learning Disability teams in Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care System, Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council, with funding from the East of England Cancer Alliance.

Contact us

 cpics.org.uk

 03300 571030

 Gemini House, 1 Bartholomew's Walk, Cambridgeshire Business Park Angel Drove, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB7 4EA