

# Get the **HPV test**

For Peace of Mind

**Protect Yourself Against Cervical Cancer**



For more information, visit [www.thehpvtest.com](http://www.thehpvtest.com)

## Protect Yourself Against Cervical Cancer

Cancer is a scary disease. But cervical cancer is one of the few types of cancers that can actually be prevented.

Prevention of cervical cancer is possible by finding out if you have a virus called the human papillomavirus, or HPV. Certain “high-risk” types of HPV are now known to cause most cases of cervical cancer.

In the past, healthcare providers have relied on the Pap test to determine who is at risk for cervical cancer. A Pap looks for abnormal cells in the cervix that are caused by HPV. If these abnormal cells are found early, they can be treated before they turn into cancer. Thanks to the Pap, the number of women who develop cervical cancer has decreased dramatically.

However, the Pap test is not foolproof, since it cannot detect HPV directly. When the Pap is done by itself, abnormal cells may be missed or may not be seen early enough to prevent cervical cancer.



## Good News!

You now can have another test along with your Pap that determines if you have HPV. Digene's HPV test is the only test for HPV approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). It uses advanced technology to detect the genetic (DNA) code of HPV.

If you are age 30 or over (when cervical cancer is most likely to occur), it's recommended that you have the HPV test along with a Pap, to increase the ability of your healthcare provider to protect you against cervical cancer. If you are under 30, he or she may order an HPV test if your Pap result is unclear or abnormal.

# The Link Between HPV and Cervical Cancer

HPV is a common virus. In fact, it's estimated that 8 out of every 10 people get HPV at some point in their lives.

## How does a person get HPV in the first place?

High-risk types of HPV that cause cervical cancer are spread through sex or intimate skin-to-skin contact. HPV can “hide” in the cervical cells for a long period of time and not be detected. There are no warning symptoms for HPV.

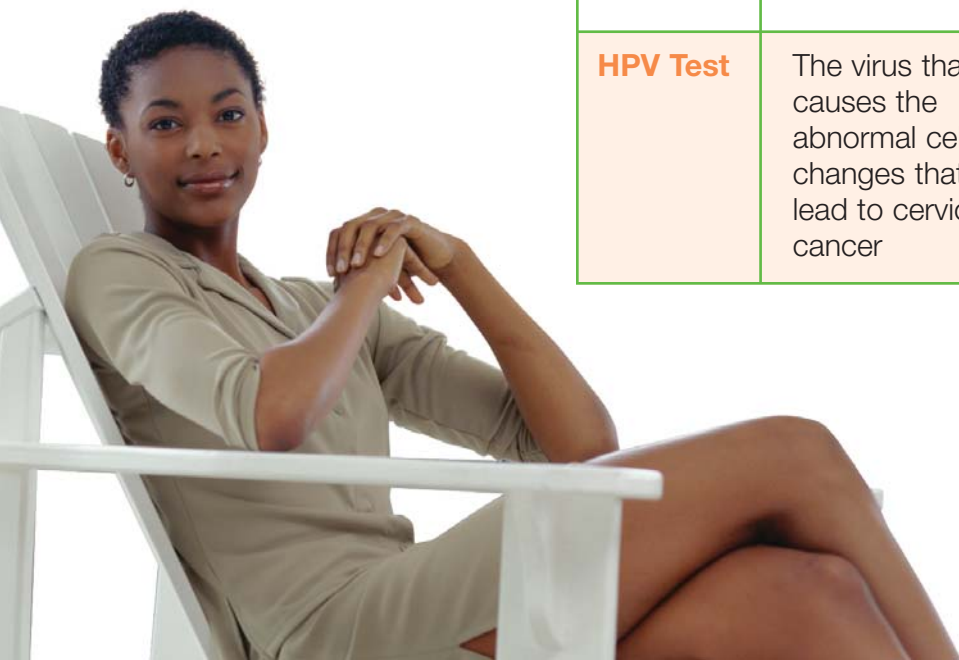
## If a woman has HPV, does that mean she will get cancer?

No! Most women fight off the virus before it causes any problems. It's only when high-risk types of HPV don't go away that abnormal cells can develop.

## Doesn't a Pap test detect HPV?

Not exactly. The Pap cannot detect HPV directly. A laboratory technician looks at a sample of your cervical cells under a microscope for signs of abnormal changes, which are caused by the virus. While the Pap can identify many women in need of treatment, it is not foolproof.

	Looks For	How it Works
Pap Test	Signs of abnormal cell changes	A lab professional looks at a sample of cervical cells through a microscope
HPV Test	The virus that causes the abnormal cell changes that can lead to cervical cancer	A computerized molecular test is done on either the same sample of cervical cells collected for the Pap, or on a separate sample



## Understanding Your Test Results

The chart below explains what your HPV and Pap results mean to you, as well as how often you should get the HPV test. It is based on medical guidelines developed by a panel of experts from the National Cancer Institute, the American Society for Colposcopy and Cervical Pathology, and the American Cancer Society.

	Normal Pap (and are age 30 or over)*	Inconclusive Pap (ASC-US)	Abnormal Pap
<b>Do not have HPV</b>	<p>Good news! You can rest assured that you are not at risk for cervical cancer, and do not need to be retested for HPV for 3 years!</p> <p>However, your healthcare provider will need to see you next year for other important women's health checks, such as a pelvic and breast exam.</p>	<p>There is probably nothing to worry about, but you should repeat the Pap and HPV tests in 12 months, just to be sure.</p>	<p>Even though cervical disease is highly unlikely if you do not have HPV, it still is important to understand why your cells look abnormal.</p> <p>Your healthcare provider will likely perform a procedure called a colposcopy that allows your cervix to be more closely examined. In some cases, a sample of tissue will be taken for analysis.</p>
<b>Have HPV</b>	<p>It's recommended that you have another HPV and Pap test in 6-12 months. If either test is abnormal at that time, your healthcare provider will likely do a colposcopy, a procedure that allows your cervix to be more closely examined. Depending on what the exam shows, this will allow treatment to be started immediately and early, if needed.</p>	<p>A colposcopy is recommended so that your cervix can be more thoroughly examined.</p>	<p>Your healthcare provider will do a colposcopy to better examine your cervix.</p>

\*If you are under age 30, current guidelines say you do not need to be tested for HPV unless your Pap result is unclear or abnormal.



# Protect Yourself! Get Both the Pap and HPV Tests

## Who should have the HPV test?

Cervical cancer is less of a risk in women younger than 30. Thus, in women younger than 30, medical experts suggest that the HPV test be done only when the Pap is not clearly abnormal, but not clearly normal either. Once a woman reaches the age of 30, the HPV test is approved for routine use, at the same time as the Pap, for every woman.

## Will insurance pay for the HPV test?

Most insurance companies pay for the HPV test if your healthcare provider follows the guidelines for HPV testing issued by medical organizations such as the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the American Cancer Society.

However, there are still some insurance plans that do not pay for routine HPV testing in women 30 and older. Therefore, it is best to check in advance.



**Marie Savard, MD**

“When I tell my patients that the HPV test with a Pap is better than a Pap alone at identifying women with abnormal cells that can lead to cancer, and that it can determine if they’re at increased risk, I don’t think there has even been one woman who decided she didn’t want it. Women want to be smart about their health care, and knowing their HPV status is empowering to them.”

— Marie Savard, MD

Author, “How to Save Your Own Life”

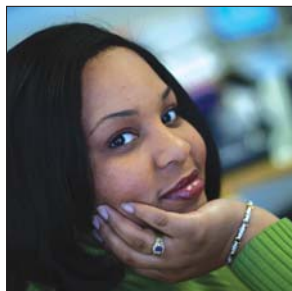


## What do you need to do to get the HPV test along with your Pap?

If you have additional questions about the HPV test, go to the Web site [www.thehpvtest.com](http://www.thehpvtest.com), or talk to your healthcare provider. Do not be afraid to ask questions!

If you are 30 years of age or older and decide you want to have the HPV test along with your Pap, tell your healthcare provider before your next visit.

Get the extra peace of mind that comes from knowing that you've done everything you can to protect yourself from cervical cancer.



**Tamika L. Felder**

"I don't want cervical cancer to happen to another woman. This is the only cancer that we know both the cause and how to potentially wipe it out. No one is talking about it! Why aren't we talking about HPV and telling women about how to get screened for it?"

— **Tamika L. Felder**

Cervical Cancer Survivor & Activist



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