

Un t̥hokáta nitháwa ohóyakila na ohólaič'iya Pap testing

Respect yourself and your future with Pap testing

A Pap test detects cervical cancer in patients with a cervix. This is your first step in lowering your chance of cervical cancer.

Cervical cancer is the most common HPV-associated cancer among Native women. It's important for you to talk to your health care provider to discuss testing.

When should I get tested?

- Women ages 21 to 65 can be tested every three years
- Women ages 30 and older can be tested every five years if the procedure is combined with testing for HPV
- If you have certain risk factors, your health care provider may recommend more-frequent Pap test, regardless of your age

Do I need to continue regular testing?

- Yes. It's important to continue regular testing which helps detect cervical cancer earlier, lowering the chance of late-stage cancer diagnosis.

Do I need to do anything before my test?

- Avoid sex, douching, and other creams and jellies for two days before having a Pap test, these may wash away or hide abnormal cells
- Try not to schedule a Pap test during your moon or menstrual period

During your appointment

Before the Pap test these are some things you can discuss with your health care provider:

- Talk about your personal space and boundaries and what you are comfortable with
- Ask your health care provider to talk through each step of the test before it's done
- Discuss how your health care provider could make the appointment more comfortable

You may be asked to undress completely or only from the waist down. You may be asked to lie on your back, and your health care provider will gently insert a tool called a speculum into your vagina which helps to collect samples of your cervical cells using a soft brush and a flat scraping device called a spatula. This may cause pressure but usually does not hurt.

After your test you may go back to normal daily activities. Be sure to ask your health care provider when you'll have your results.

Understanding your results

Results from your Pap test will come back as either normal or abnormal.

- A **normal** result means only normal cervical cells were seen.
- An **abnormal** result means abnormal cells were seen which may mean cancer or other health concerns. It's important to talk to your health care provider as you may need more testing.

*Un t̥hokáta nitháwa ohóyakila na ohólaič'iya means "Respect yourself and your future" in the Lakota language

Un thókáta nitháwa ohóyakila na ohólaič'iya cervical HPV testing

Respect yourself and your
future with cervical HPV testing

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a virus that can lead to genital warts, abnormal cervical cells, or cancers like cervical, anal, or oral cancer. The cervical HPV test screens for cervical cancer by looking for the presence of HPV in the body. The cervical HPV test is usually done at the same time as a Pap test, this should only take a few minutes.

Native women have the highest rates of HPV-associated cancers

The cervical HPV test should be taken if:

- Your Pap test was abnormal
- You are ages 30 and older

While all Native people are at risk for HPV, the Pap test is currently available for people with a cervix only. *All relatives can protect against HPV-related cancers by getting the HPV vaccine.*

Preparing for your cervical HPV test

It can be done using the same sample from the Pap test or by collecting a second sample. You can take these steps:

- Avoid sex, douching, and other creams and jellies for two days before the test
- Try not to schedule the test during your moon or menstrual period.

During your appointment

Before the cervical HPV test these are some things you can discuss with your health care provider:

- Talk about your personal space and boundaries and what you are comfortable with
- Ask your health care provider to talk through each step of the test before it is done
- Discuss how your health care provider could make the appointment more comfortable

You may be asked to undress completely or only from the waist down. You may be asked to lie on your back, and your health care provider will gently insert a tool called a speculum into your vagina to see your cervix. Your health care provider will then take samples of your cervical cells using a soft brush and a flat scraping tool called a spatula. This does not hurt, and you may not feel the sample being taken.

After your test you can go back to all normal daily activities. Be sure to ask your health care provider when you'll have your results.

Understanding your results

Results from your cervical HPV test will come back as either positive or negative.

- A **positive HPV test** result means you have a type of high-risk HPV that is linked to cervical cancer. It does not mean you currently have cervical cancer, but it is a warning sign of cervical cancer growing in the future. Be sure to follow up with your health care provider.
- A **negative HPV test** result means you do not have any types of HPV that cause cervical cancer

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