



A Guide To Understanding Cervical Cancer

This guide will help you to learn more about cervical cancer, including:

- **What is cervical cancer?**
- **Risks and causes**
- **Reducing your risk**
- **Symptoms to look out for**
- **Screening for cervical cancer**



What is Cervical Cancer?

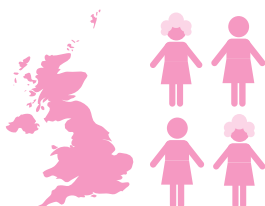
Cervical cancer is cancer of the cervix (which connects the womb and vagina and is sometimes called the neck of the womb). Cervical cancer can affect anyone with a cervix at any age, this includes women, trans men and non-binary people with a cervix.

There are two main types of cervical cancer. The most common is squamous cell carcinoma with **80%** of cases being of this type. A further **20%** of cervical cancers are adenocarcinomas.

Cervical cancer usually grows very slowly and can be prevented if cell changes are detected at an early stage.



Around **3,200** women are diagnosed with cervical cancer in the UK each year.



Risks and Causes of Cervical Cancer



Infection with the human papilloma virus (HPV) is the main cause of cervical cancer. Some types of HPV can affect the cervix and cause abnormal cell changes that may develop into cervical cancer.



HPV is common. Most sexually active people come into contact with HPV during their lifetime. But for most the virus causes no harm and goes away on its own.



Smoking also increases your risk of getting cervical cancer and this risk increases with the more cigarettes you smoke a day.



Age. Cervical cancer mostly affects women under the age of 45.

Reducing your risk

Do:



Have the HPV vaccination - These vaccines protect against the types of HPV that are most likely to cause cervical cancer. But they don't protect against all types. So, you still need to take part in cervical screening, even if you have had the HPV vaccine.



Practise safer sex by using condoms. This will reduce your risk of getting HPV and passing it on.

But they won't protect you completely. Practising safer sex will also help to protect you against many sexually transmitted diseases.



Attend regular cervical screening. This can prevent cervical cancer by picking up abnormal cell changes in the cervix.

These changes could lead to cancer if left untreated.



Symptom Checker

These are the symptoms from the [NHS website](#)

Symptoms of cervical cancer include:



Vaginal bleeding that's unusual for you – including bleeding during or after sex, between your periods or after the menopause, or having heavier periods than usual



Changes to your vaginal discharge



Pain during sex



Pain in your lower back, between your hip bones (pelvis), or in your lower tummy

If you have another condition like fibroids or endometriosis, you may get symptoms like these regularly.



If you have any symptoms, you should seek advice from your GP.

Screening



All women aged 25 to 64 are invited by letter to an NHS cervical screening to check the health of their cervix. Cervical screening used to be called a smear test.



Contact Us

Visit us at: www.reframe.co.uk

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More Information

[The Eve Appeal](#)

[Cervical cancer - Macmillan](#)

[Cervical cancer - Cancer Research UK](#)

