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Cervical cancer

What you need to know



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Cervical cancer the facts

- Cervical cancer is a cancer of the cervix. The cervix is the opening to your womb from your vagina
- It mostly affects women age 30 to 50 who have ever been sexually active. It can affect women who are younger and older.
- Women aged 25 to 65 are invited to take part in cervical screening (CervicalCheck) to check for signs of cervical cancer. Freephone 1800 45 45 55 to see if you are on the CervicalCheck register or visit www.cervicalcheck.ie
- Cervical screening **does not** check the ovaries for ovarian cancer

Risks and causes of cervical cancer

Many causes of cervical cancer are unknown, but your risk may be increased with the following:

- Nearly all cervical cancers are caused by the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV)
Having sex at a young age or having many sexual partners increases your risk of getting HPV. HPV can also be spread through close skin-to-skin touching during sex. HPV can cause cells in the cervix to change. These abnormal cell changes can develop into cervical cancer over time
- Smoking doubles the risk of cervical cancer
- If you have a weak immune system (if you had an organ transplant, kidney failure or are living with HIV) you have a higher risk

signs & symptoms

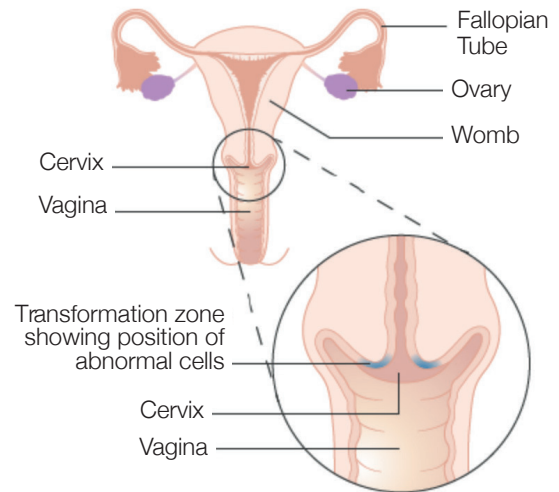
Sometimes there can be no symptoms, cervical cancer might cause signs and symptoms, such as:

- Bleeding between your periods
- Bleeding during or after sex
- Bleeding after the menopause (the change of life)
- Watery, bloody vaginal discharge that may be heavy and have a bad smell
- Pain while having sex

These are symptoms of many other conditions which are not cervical cancer but still see your doctor if you have any of these symptoms just to be sure.

How to reduce your risk of getting cervical cancer

- Get the HPV vaccination (needle): available free in the first year of secondary school
- Talk to your doctor if you missed the vaccine.
- Have regular cervical screening (CervicalCheck)
- Use condoms during sex
- Don't smoke or get help to quit smoking - **Freephone 1800 201 203** or **Freetext QUIT to 50100**



Cancer Research UK

Important things to remember

- Know what's normal for you
- Talk to someone if you notice changes and if the changes don't go away you should talk to your doctor
- Attend cervical screening if you're 25 - 65 years old
- The earlier the signs of cancer are found, the better.