

Having a smear test



Easy Read 2020 edition

We have made this leaflet as accessible as possible. There may still be some difficult ideas in it.

You might need to ask a friend, family member, carer or health professional to help you read this booklet.



This symbol means there is a difficult word. We have explained what the word means.



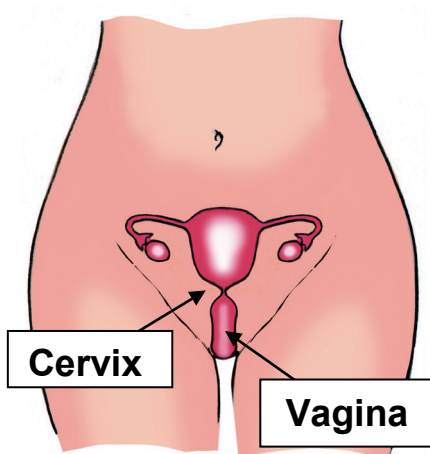
Cervical cancer. This is a serious illness that needs to be treated.

Cervix. This is a part of your womb.

Cells. These are tiny parts of your body that are tested to see if you are ill.

HPV. The virus that can cause cervical cancer.

What is a smear test?



The smear test looks at a sample of **cells** for changes in your **cervix**.

It checks your **cells** for the **HPV** virus.



The test looks for changes in your **cells** that might turn into **cervical cancer**.



It's important to go for the smear test every time you are asked.



All women between 25 and 64 years old are asked to go for a smear test.

Why have a smear test?



It can stop **cervical cancer** before it starts.



The test only takes about 5 minutes and could save your life.



It is the best way to find out if you are at risk of **cervical cancer**.

Making an appointment with your doctor.

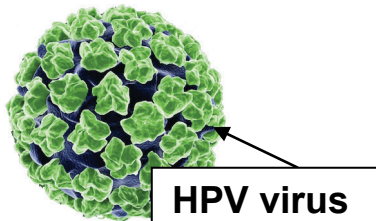


You will get a letter in the post asking you to make an appointment for a smear test.



Phone your GP surgery and make an appointment to have a smear test.

HPV and cervical cancer



Most cervical cancers are caused by **HPV**.



Your body will usually get rid of most **HPV** infections by itself.



HPV is spread by having sex or sexual contact with someone.

stop smoking



Smoking also increases your chances of getting **cervical cancer**.

What will happen at your appointment



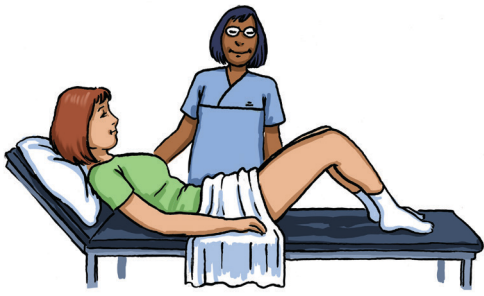
The smear test only takes five minutes and the nurse or doctor can answer any questions before you have it.



A nurse or female doctor will do the smear test. They will ask you questions about your health before they do the test.



You will be asked to undress from the waist down or just to remove your underwear if wearing a skirt.



You will also be given a sheet to cover yourself.



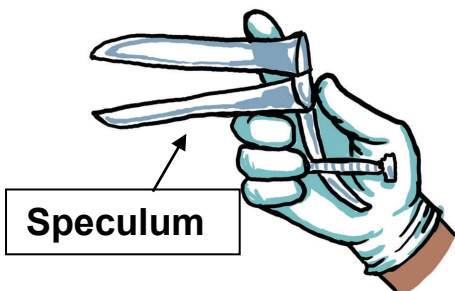
It is normal for women to feel embarrassed, especially at their very first appointment.



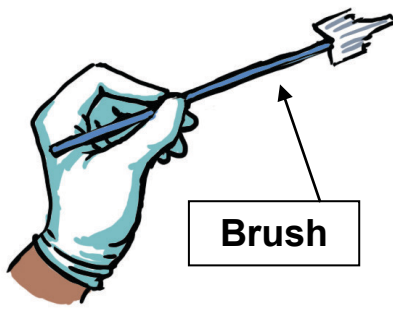
You can stop the test at any time by telling the nurse or doctor.



You will be asked to lie on an examination bed.

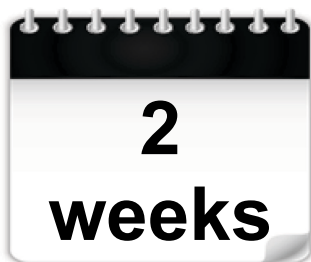


The nurse or doctor will gently put a speculum which is a medical instrument into your vagina to hold it open, so they can see your **cervix**.



They will then gently brush cells from the cervix using a soft brush.

When will I get my test results?



You will usually get your results in the post within 2 weeks.

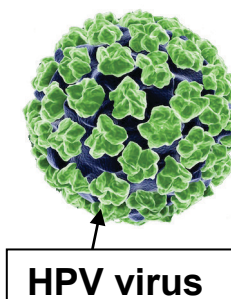
What results could I get?

There was no HPV found



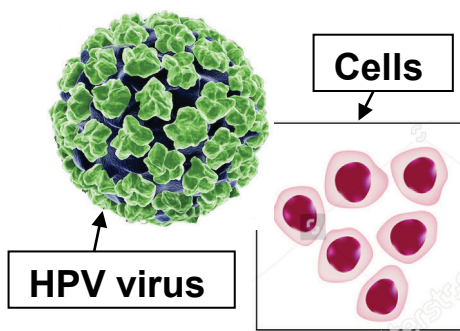
If no HPV found in your cells, you will be asked to have another smear test in 5 years.

HPV was found but no changes to your cells



You will be asked to have another smear test to check that the HPV virus has cleared up.

HPV was found and changes to your cells



You will be asked to come back for more tests with a specialist.

There was not enough cells to test



This means the test did not work properly.

You will be asked to have the test again.

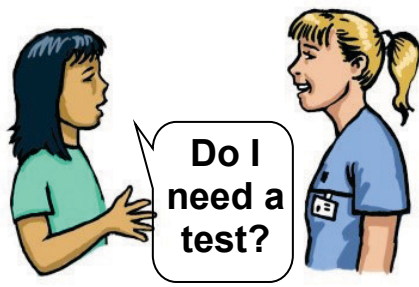
Do I need the test?



Anyone who has had any kind of sex or any kind of sexual touching with a man or woman should have a smear test.



Even if you have not had sex before, you can still choose to have a smear test.



If you have any questions please ask your nurse or GP.

Where can I get more information?



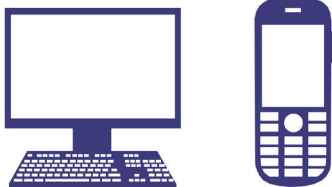
By talking to your nurse or GP.



Call the cervical screening team on
0800 22 44 88
(textphone 18001 0800 22 44 88).



Visit www.nhsinform.scot/cervicalscreening



Contact Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust

Web: www.jostrust.org.uk

www.jostrust.org.uk/smeartestfilm

Call: 0808 802 8000



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The original English version of this resource may also be available in other languages and formats.



For other formats email

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