Bournbrook Varsity Medical Practice

NHS

Cervical Screening: A Patient Guide

Background

- Cervical screening, also known as a smear test, looks for a virus called Human Papillomavirus (HPV) in the cervix
- The cervix is located at the top of your vagina
- The smear test saves thousands of lives each year by helping to prevent cervical cancer

Importance of cervical screening

- For a minority of women HPV can lead to cervical cancer
- Attending screening can help identify this virus, meaning treatment can be started sooner if required. This is associated with better outcomes

Things to know before the test

- You will be notified when you are due for a smear test, with guidance on how to book
- It's best to book a smear test for a time when you're not on your period.
- You can book at any time if you do not have periods
- Do not use any creams on your vagina **2 days** before your test
- The smear test is usually done by a female nurse or doctor; you can also request this

What to expect during your appointment

The nurse or doctor will first confirm your details, e.g. your name and age. You may ask any questions you may have now or throughout**.**

Behind a screen, you'll need to undress (waist down). Paper towel will be provided to put over

You will be asked to lie back on the bed, usually with your legs bent, feet together and knees apart.

Gently, a smooth, cylindrical speculum (see image) will be placed inside your vagina, using a small amount of lubricant.

A soft, small brush will be used to take a sample of cells from your cervix. This shouldn't be painful, but may be slightly uncomfortable.

The speculum will be removed and you will be given privacy to get dressed.

Please note:
- ➢ A chaperone can be requested
- ➢ You may stop the test at any time
- ➢ The test itself takes 1-2 minutes; the whole appointment may last 10 minutes
- ➢ A longer appointment can be requested to ensure your comfort

Who should have a smear test?

Women between 25-49 are invited every 3 years; those aged 50-64 are invited every 5 years for cervical screening

The smear test is recommended:
- o even if you have had the HPV vaccination
- o whether or not you are sexually active
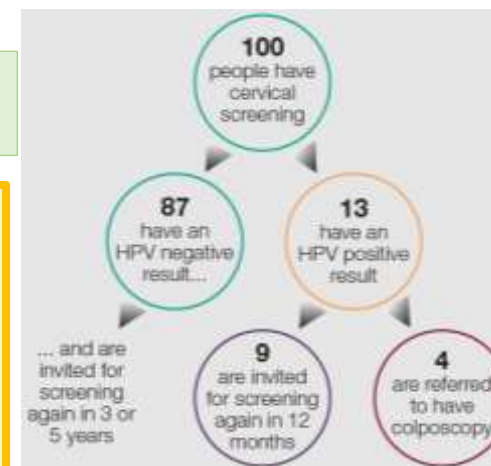
You cannot have the smear test if:
- o you are pregnant
- o within 12 weeks of childbirth
- o you have had a hysterectomy

Please contact your GP if you experience:

- Unusual bleeding
  - o during or after sex
  - o between periods
  - o after menopause
- Unusual discharge

After the test

- You will get the result of your smear test in a letter, usually within a few weeks
- The test shows if HPV is present (see below)
  - o Occasionally, the sample is 'inadequate' and repeat screening is needed
- If more tests are needed, these will be explained to you in your result letter

For more information, please visit:

- www.nhs.uk/cervical
- www.jostrust.org.uk/
- www.cancerresearchuk.org/cervical

To book, please visit:

- o **http://bournbrookvarsitymedical.co.uk/**
  or
- o Birmingham & Solihull Health App: https://app.birminghamandsolihullhealthapp.com/splash
- o Patient Access: https://account.patientaccess.com/Account/Login
- o Call us on 0121 472 0129