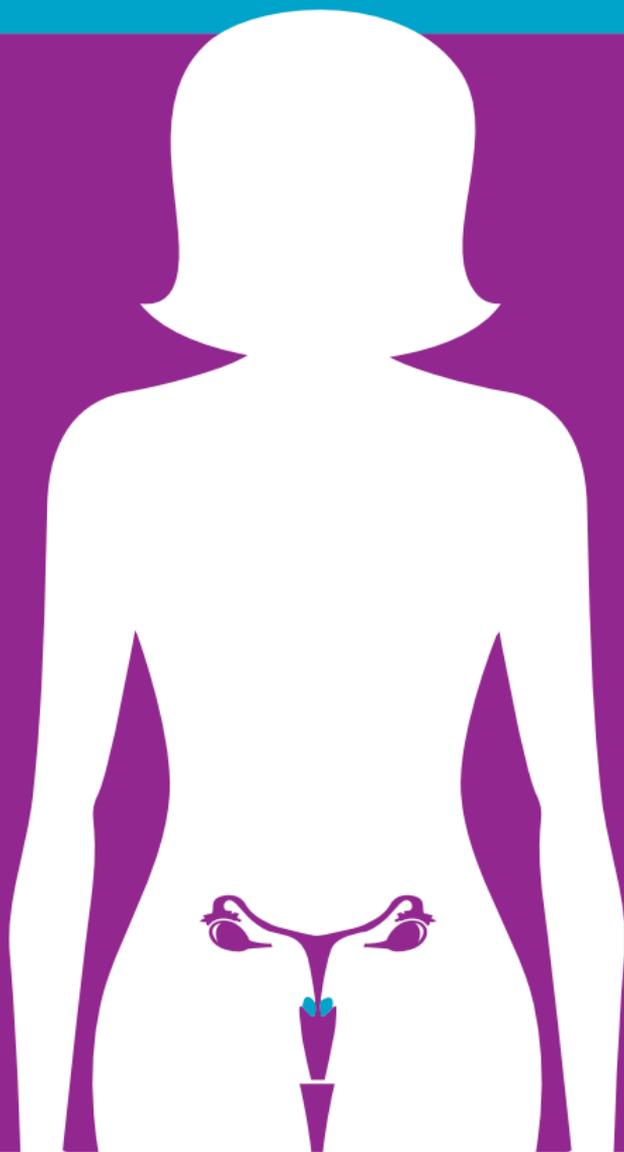


# Cervical screening

*Helping you make an  
informed choice*



  
**yorkshire cancer**  
research

*Saving Yorkshire Lives*

Cervical cancer develops in the entrance to the womb from the vagina – this is called the ‘cervix’.

Cervical screening can find early changes to cells in the cervix before they turn into cancer.

### Symptoms of cervical cancer include:

- Unusual bleeding from the vagina – this includes bleeding when you are not on your period or bleeding after the menopause
- An unpleasant smelling vaginal discharge
- Pain and discomfort during sex, or bleeding after sex

**If you notice any of the symptoms listed above, or are worried about any other symptoms, talk to your doctor straight away. Do not wait for your next screening invitation before telling a doctor or nurse.**

**1 in 135 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer in their lifetime**

Early stage cervical cancer often has no symptoms. This means it is very important to go for screening when you are invited.



## The HPV vaccine

Almost all cases of cervical cancer are caused by a family of viruses called ‘human papilloma virus’ (HPV). HPV is very common, and is spread by skin-to-skin and genital contact.

**Even if you have had the HPV vaccine, you still need to take part in cervical screening**

The NHS HPV vaccination programme was introduced to protect women from two types of HPV which cause more than 7 in 10 cervical cancers in the UK. Vaccinating against HPV will help to prevent many cervical cancers.

**This vaccine is offered to all girls aged 12 to 13.**

It is given as two injections in the upper arm, at least 6 months apart.

# Cervical screening

Previously known as a smear test, cervical screening can find early changes to cells in the cervix.

A doctor or nurse will insert an instrument called a 'speculum' into your vagina – this allows them to see your cervix. They will then use a small, soft brush to gently collect some cells from your cervix.

This is not a test to find cancer, it is a test to find abnormal cells that could turn into cancer. This means the cells can be checked or removed to help prevent cervical cancer.

## Who is offered cervical screening?

Cervical screening is routinely available to women aged 25 to 64.

- If you are aged 25 to 49 and are registered with a GP, you should be sent an invitation for cervical screening every 3 years.
- If you are aged 50 to 64 and are registered with a GP, you should be sent an invitation for cervical screening every 5 years.
- If you are over 65 and are registered with a GP, you will only be sent an invitation for cervical screening if you have not been screened since the age of 50, or if you have recently had an abnormal test result.

**If you think you may have missed a cervical screening appointment, or have not been invited, contact your doctor. Make sure your doctor has your current contact details.**

**It is important that you keep going for cervical screening during the time it is offered – even after the menopause.**

## Cervical screening results

If you get a normal result this means no abnormal cells were found in your sample. However, this does not mean you will never get cervical cancer. You should continue going for screening in the future and look out for any symptoms.

19 in 20 women get a normal result



1 in 20 women get an abnormal result

If you get an abnormal result this means you will need more tests. In most cases an abnormal result is not cervical cancer, however, if the abnormal cells found are left untreated they could change into cervical cancer in the future.

**Less than 1 in 1,000 cervical screenings will find cancer**

# Did you know?

Participation in cervical screening in Yorkshire is better than the England average, and in some areas of Yorkshire as many as 8 in 10 women go for their screening when invited. In other areas of Yorkshire only 6 in 10 women go for their cervical screening when invited.

Yorkshire Cancer Research wants to give information about cervical screening to help you make an informed choice. We are encouraging participation in cervical screening which will help more women get an early diagnosis. Getting cancer diagnosed earlier will help to save lives.

**If you have any questions about cervical screening, talk to your doctor or practice nurse.**

**If you think you may have missed a cervical screening appointment, contact your doctor.**



This leaflet has been produced as part of our Wise Up To Cancer programme. Please help us offer this programme across Yorkshire by supporting Yorkshire Cancer Research.

You can make a one off donation or sign up to give monthly by visiting [www.ycr.org.uk/donate](http://www.ycr.org.uk/donate). You can also make a donation today by texting **YORKSHIRE** to **70007** to donate £3.

Thank you.

[www.ycr.org.uk/wiseuptocancer](http://www.ycr.org.uk/wiseuptocancer)

