

# Cancers and diseases

caused by **HPV\*** can develop in both **males** and **females**<sup>2,3,4</sup>

For most people, **HPV is a common virus that can clear on its own.** But there is no way to predict who will clear it.<sup>2,3</sup>

IT'S YOUR LIFE,  
**WHY TAKE A CHANCE**



Talk to your  
**Doctor  
TODAY**  
about  
**HPV**  
prevention

*Not the actual patient. For illustration purposes only.*

#fightHPVtogether  
#notjustforwomen

\*HPV = human papillomavirus

# HPV AND MALES

Cancers and diseases caused by HPV can develop in males as well as females.

In fact, HPV is more frequently transmitted from females to males than vice versa.<sup>4,5</sup>

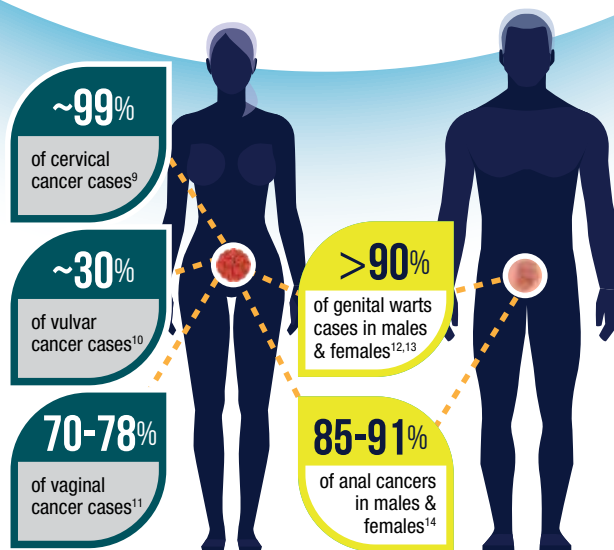
Studies show that HPV infection commonly occurs in males from early adulthood until old age.<sup>5,6</sup>

Despite this, there are no routine HPV screening methods recommended for males.<sup>7,8</sup>

This means males who have HPV may be unaware of the infection and may pass it on to others.

As a result, **males with HPV can develop certain cancers and diseases without knowing it.** The same can happen to any partners who get infected.

Globally, **HPV** is responsible for



## WHAT CAN MEN AND BOYS DO ABOUT HPV?

Although routine screening is not available for males, immunization can offer protection against HPV-related cancers and diseases.

Sexual abstinence can also prevent HPV infection, while condom use can offer partial protection as well.<sup>15</sup>

It is best to talk to a doctor for advice on preventing HPV infection.



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For illustration purposes only.

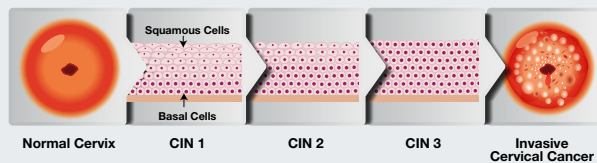
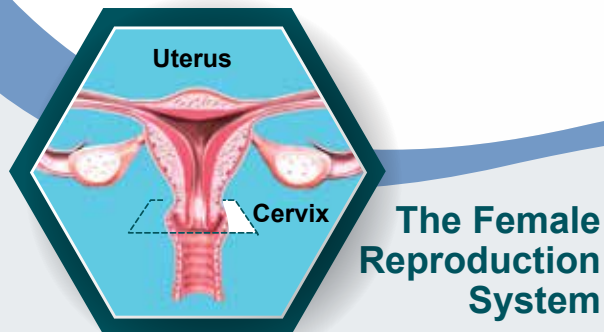
**Cervical cancer** is the **6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> most common female cancer** in **women** aged **15-34 years** and **35-64 years** respectively in **Singapore.**<sup>1</sup>

From 2013-2017

## What is Cervical Cancer?

**Cervical Cancer is a disease in which the cells in the cervix grow out of control.**<sup>15</sup>

From 2013-2017, cervical cancer is the 9<sup>th</sup> leading cause of cancer death in women in Singapore. Every month, around 18 new cases of cervical cancer are diagnosed and around 6 women lose the fight against cervical cancer.<sup>1</sup>



 HPV Infected Cells

CIN: Cervical Intraepithelial Neoplasia ; HPV - Human Papillomavirus

# HUMAN PAPILOMAVIRUS (HPV)

HPV is the most common viral infection of the reproductive tract.<sup>17</sup> HPV can be transmitted from one person to another through skin to skin genital contact.<sup>15</sup>

The most important risk factor for cervical cancer is being infected with HPV.<sup>2,3</sup>

Infection with HPV is common as 80% of sexually active individuals will get HPV infection at some point in their life. HPV can affect everyone even those who are married or in a steady relationship.<sup>3,16</sup>

In most people, the body can clear the infection by itself.<sup>15</sup> But sometimes the infection doesn't go away and becomes persistent. Persistent infection with HPV, especially when it's caused by high-risk types, can cause certain HPV-related cancers over time, including cervical cancer.<sup>2,3</sup>



\* Not the actual patient.  
For illustration purposes only.

# SYMPTOMS OF CERVICAL CANCER

Most women do not have any signs or symptoms of a pre-cancer until it becomes a true invasive cancer and invades nearby tissue.

## The most common symptoms are:

- Abnormal vaginal bleeding, such as bleeding after sex, bleeding after menopause, bleeding and spotting between periods, and having longer or heavier (menstrual) periods than usual.<sup>15</sup>
- An unusual discharge from the vagina – the discharge may contain some blood and may occur between your periods or after menopause.<sup>15</sup>
- Pain during sex (vaginal intercourse).<sup>15</sup>



# WHAT CAN I DO TO LOWER MY RISK OF CERVICAL CANCER?

Cervical cancer can be prevented via HPV vaccination and regular cervical screening. When detected early, cervical cancer is more than 90% treatable in the early stages. Therefore, regular screening is encouraged as there are no signs or symptoms at the early stages of cervical cancer.<sup>18</sup>

## Screening

**For women between 25 to 29 years old and have ever had sex [Pap Test]**

The Pap test (Pap smear) looks for abnormal changes in the cervical cells and is recommended for women between 25-29 years old. At this age, most infections can be easily cleared by one's own body and doing a HPV test may lead to some unnecessary follow-up tests.<sup>18</sup>

**For women 30 years old and above and have ever had sex [HPV Test]**

A HPV test will check if the cells collected from your cervix has the DNA (genetic material) of the high risk cancer-causing HPV strains (e.g. 16, 18). This is a more effective test compared to a Pap test. This is because while your cells may appear normal but with the presence of high risk HPV strains, the risk of your cells turning abnormal in the future is higher.<sup>18</sup>

## Vaccination

That can help to protect you against certain HPV related cancers and diseases.<sup>15</sup>

Sexual abstinence can also prevent HPV infection, while condom use can offer partial protection as well.<sup>15</sup>



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The Society for Colposcopy &  
Cervical Pathology of Singapore



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