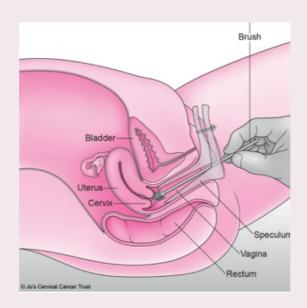# What is cervical screening?

Cervical screening is a free health test available on the NHS as part of the national cervical screening programme. It helps prevent cervical cancer by checking for a virus called high-risk HPV and cervical cell changes. It is not a test for cancer.

It is your choice whether to participate in cervical screening but you should make an informed choice whatever your decision.

#smeartestssavelives

Who is invited for cervical screening?

You should be invited for cervical screening if you have a cervix. Women are usually born with a cervix. Trans men, non-binary and intersex people may also have one.

In the UK, you are automatically invited for cervical screening if you are:

- between the ages of 25 to 64
- registered as female with a GP surgery

You may get your first invite up to 6 months before you turn 25. You can book an appointment as soon as you get the invite.

How often will I be invited for cervical screening?

Your cervical screening result will help decide when you are next invited for cervical screening. Depending on your age and / previous results you may be invited every year, every 3 years, every 5 years or referred straight to colposcopy for more tests.

If you are eligible for screening speak to our receptionists today to book your appointment

Symptoms of cervical cancer include:

- Vaginal bleeding that's unusual for you – including bleeding during or after sex, between your periods or after the menopause, or having heavier periods than usual
- Changes to your vaginal discharge
- Pain during sex
- Pain in your lower back, between your hip bones (pelvis), or in your lower tummy

If you have another condition like fibroids or endometriosis, you may get symptoms like these regularly.

You might find you get used to them. But it's important to be checked by a GP if your symptoms change, get worse, or do not feel normal for you.

See a GP if you have any symptoms of cervical cancer

Try not to be embarrassed – the doctor or nurse will be used to talking about these symptoms.

Cervical screening for trans men and/or non-binary people

Have I got a cervix?

The cervix is inside the body at the top of the vagina, which joins to the bottom of the womb. People who were assigned female at birth usually have a cervix.

If you have had gender confirmation surgery or previous treatment, such as a hysterectomy, you may not have a cervix. It is best to check with the healthcare team who did the treatment if you are not sure.

Will I be invited for cervical screening?

Currently, only people who are registered as female with their GP surgery or clinic are automatically invited for cervical screening.

If you are registered as male, aged between 25 and 64, and want to go for cervical screening, you can:

- ask your GP surgery to send you invites directly – they may be able to add a reminder to your medical record
- put a reminder in your phone or calendar to ask for an appointment every 3 or 5 years, depending on your age and where you live.

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There are also expert clinics, including some trans-led clinics, that offer cervical screening. Although these clinics can't invite you automatically, you can book an appointment with one. More information about these clinics can be found at www.jostrust.org.uk/information/cervical-screening/trans-non-binary or by scanning the QR code

We know that cervical screening isn't easy for everyone. If you are worried about anything before, during or after the test, Jos Trust are there to support you with your questions or by talking the process through on **0808 802 8000**.

You will also find a welcoming community in their online Forum, including an LGBTQ thread, where you can get and give support. There are lots of conversations about cervical screening, so you can choose to read existing threads or post your own messages.

If you have general questions about cervical screening, their Ask the Expert service may be able to help. Submit your question confidentially to their panel of experts and get a tailored reply. All questions submitted to our panel are made anonymous.