

HEALTH TIPS

Make Health Happen

Why are pap tests important?

WHAT IS A PAP TEST?

A Pap test checks for changes in the cells of a woman's cervix that may lead to cervical cancer. Your doctor will collect a few cells from the cervix to send to a lab for testing.

The **cervix** is the lower, narrow end of the uterus. It forms an opening between the uterus and the vagina.

Who needs a Pap test?

Women should have their first Pap test at age 21. For most women, Pap tests should be done every three-to-five years until you reach age 65. Your doctor can tell you how often you need to have one done. Be sure to also ask your doctor about human papillomavirus (HPV) testing if you haven't already received your HPV vaccination.

Human papillomaviruses (HPVs)

HPVs are a group of more than 100 viruses. They are passed from person to person through sexual contact. HPV infection is one of the biggest causes of cervical cancer. Ask your doctor about being tested for HPV.

Did you know?

- A Pap test only takes a few minutes to complete.
- An abnormal Pap test result does not always mean you have cervical cancer.
- Most cancers of the cervix can be detected early by having regular Pap tests.

- If not found and treated early, cervical cancer may lead to:
 - o Infertility
 - o Loss of uterus
 - o Death

What's keeping you from getting a Pap test?

You may be worried about what a Pap test will find. That's normal. But think about the benefits. Here's what having a Pap test can do for you:

- Give you peace of mind
- Catch a problem early to help you live a longer, healthier life

Talk to your doctor about your concerns. You can also call MedCall at **1-888-850-1108 (TTY 1-800-368-4424)** and talk to a nurse 24 hours a day, 7 days a week about any health-related questions.



What you can do

Call your doctor and set up an appointment for a Pap test. It's the best thing you can do to protect yourself from cervical cancer. Then, follow your doctor's advice about when to have the next one.

For more information about Pap tests and cervical cancer, visit www.womenshealth.gov.

Office on Women's Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services website: www.womenshealth.gov. (Accessed June 6, 2014.)



www.unicare.com

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Helpful phone numbers for UniCare Health Plan of West Virginia, Inc. only

Customer Care Center: 1-800-782-0095 (TTY 1-866-378-1634)

MedCall: 1-888-850-1108 (TTY 1-800-368-4424)

We can translate this for you at no cost.