

# Cervical Screening

What wāhine need to know

Atawhaitia te Wharetangata



[www.timetoscreen.nz](http://www.timetoscreen.nz)

**Time to  
screen**

National  
Cervical  
Screening  
Programme

# Atawhaitia te Wharetangata

*He huarahi whakamaru mō te  
wharetangata, mō te iwi*

*A way of protection for the womb, and  
for the future of all*

## Kia Ora

Being part of the National Cervical Screening Programme (NCSP) and having cervical screening tests every three years can prevent cervical cancer. The test shows if there are abnormal changes in the cells on the surface of your cervix. These could develop into cervical cancer if left untreated, over time.



Haere, hei oranga mō te whānau - Go for the whānau

# Me haere ngā wāhine katoa?

## Who needs cervical screening?

If you have ever been sexually active, you should have regular cervical screening every three years from age 25 until you turn 70.

If you have had a hysterectomy check with your health provider if you still need to be screened.

## Kia tūpato ki tēnei ngāngara

### Be aware of HPV

- Almost all cervical cancer is caused by human papillomavirus (HPV), which is spread by sexual activity. Eighty percent of people who have been sexually active will have an HPV infection at some point in their lives.
- There are many types of HPV. Most HPV infections will clear up by themselves.
- Only a few types of HPV will lead to abnormal, precancerous cells that could progress to cancer.
- Cervical cancer usually takes many years to develop. Through regular screening, abnormal cells can be found and treated before becoming cancer.
- The HPV vaccine protects against some high-risk types of HPV. However, it doesn't protect against them all, so it's important to continue with cervical screening even if you've had the vaccine. The vaccine is free for everyone, male and female, aged 9 - 26 years, including non-residents under the age of 18.



Having regular cervical screening every three years is important to find abnormal cell changes and prevent cervical cancer from developing.

# He pēhea te āhua o te whakamātautau?

## What happens during the test?

Cervical screening only takes a few minutes. You may find it a little uncomfortable, but it should not hurt.

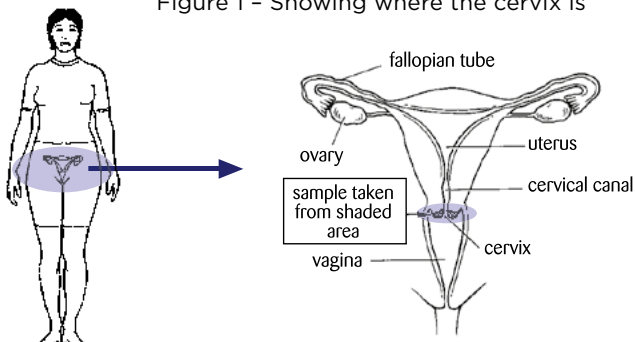
A few cells will be collected from your cervix (the neck of the womb) and placed into a liquid solution that preserves the cells for testing. The test looks for abnormal cells. Any abnormal cells are able to be treated to stop them from becoming cancer.

In some situations you may be offered an HPV test – which tests for the virus that may lead to cervical cancer. The HPV test is performed on the same sample as the cervical screening test, so there is no need to have a second test.

If this is your first test, find out what to expect and why screening is important at [www.starttoscreen.nz](http://www.starttoscreen.nz)

**!** If you change your address, please advise your health provider, and the National Cervical Screening Programme, on freephone **0800 729 729** or email [info@ncspregister.health.nz](mailto:info@ncspregister.health.nz).

Figure 1 - Showing where the cervix is



# Mā wai e kawe ngā whakamātautau?

## Who does the test?

The test can only be done by trained health professionals. You can find a provider at:

- Your nearest Whare Rapuora - Māori health centre
- Other community health centres or women's health centres
- Your GP clinic - there are many female GPs or practice nurses who do cervical screening
- Family Planning clinics.

## He aha te utu?

### What does cervical screening cost?

You are usually charged a fee for the test. Some Māori providers and community and primary health organisations offer a free or low cost service. You may like to check out the cost options when you booking your appointment.

# Nga hua o te tirohanga

## Your results

Most results are normal, however you may be asked to go back for another test if there were not enough cells in the sample, or if something needs checking. An abnormal result hardly ever means cancer.

## The National Cervical Screening Programme

The programme aims to prevent cervical cancer. Anyone who has a cervical screening test is part of the programme unless they say they do not want to be.

The benefits of recording cervical screening information include:

- ready availability of records to you, your health provider and the laboratory analysing your tests
- automatic reminder letters if you are overdue for having a cervical screening test
- checks to ensure the right follow-up after an abnormal screening test
- planning for the needs of different ethnic groups.

## What information is collected or used?

Cervical screening and colposcopy results are recorded on the National Cervical Screening Programme Register (NCSP Register). The information can be requested by your health provider and is used by the programme for monitoring and evaluation under strict rules of confidentiality. De-identified laboratory specimens and results may be used for quality control or teaching purposes.

## Withdrawing from the programme

You can withdraw from the programme at any time by filling in a form or by writing to the programme. When you withdraw, any cervical screening tests recorded on the register will be deleted and future tests are not recorded.

## Kia mōhio noa iho koe

### Just so you know

Cervical screening is the best way of showing cell changes in the cervix.

There is always a small chance that some abnormal cells may not be found by the test. Abnormal changes progress very slowly, so it is very likely that any abnormal cells that are missed will be picked up at the next test.

On the other hand, there is also a small chance a result will say that abnormal cells have been found when your cervix is normal. A further cervical screening test or colposcopy may confirm this.

## Me maumahara

### Remember

If you have any unusual vaginal bleeding, pain or discharge see your doctor or nurse.

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# He kōrero nui whakahirahira

## Important message

- If you have ever been sexually active, you should have regular cervical screening every three years from age 25 until you turn 70.
- Regular cervical screening save lives!

## Mō ētahi atu kōrero

### For further information

Contact the National Cervical Screening Programme on freephone **0800 729 729**, or visit the website: **[www.timetoscreen.nz](http://www.timetoscreen.nz)**

If you are new to screening visit **[www.starttoscreen.nz](http://www.starttoscreen.nz)** for more information.

The National Cervical Screening Programme also has the following resources:

- **Cervical Screening: What you need to know**, code HE1256
- **Cervical Screening: Understanding cervical screening test results**, code HE4598
- **Colposcopy: Information for women**, code HE1202.

**[www.timetoscreen.nz](http://www.timetoscreen.nz)**



National  
Cervical  
Screening  
Programme

New Zealand Government

 **health promotion  
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