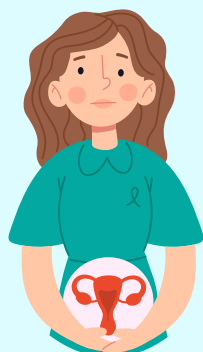


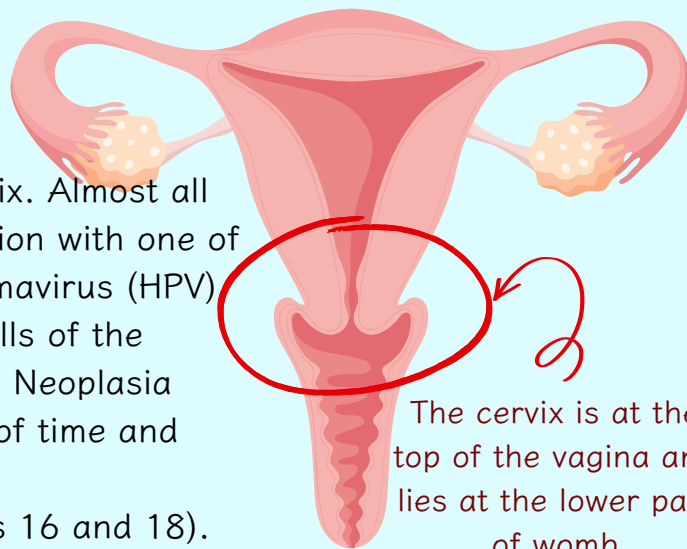


香港紅十字會  
HONG KONG RED CROSS

# Cervical Cancer Awareness Month



Cervical Cancer Awareness Month has been designated as every January by the International Agency for Research on Cancer under the World Health Organization. Cervical cancer is one of the most common cancers threatening women's health. In Hong Kong, it was the 8th most common female cancer with 520 new cases in 2019. The cure rate of early cervical cancer can reach up to 90%. Therefore, early detection and treatment are important.



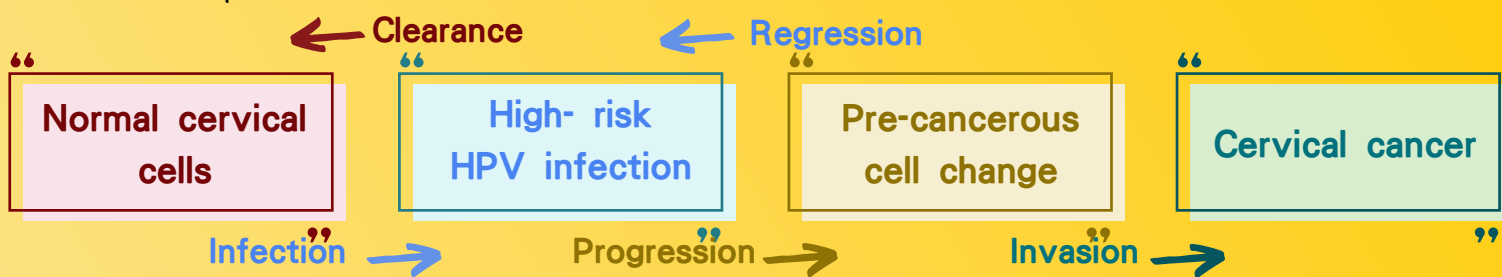
The cervix is at the top of the vagina and lies at the lower part of womb

## What is Cervical cancer?

Cervical cancer is cancer that starts in the cervix. Almost all cervical cancers are caused by persistent infection with one of the cancer-causing (or high-risk) human papillomavirus (HPV) types. It may cause abnormal changes to the cells of the cervix, a condition called Cervical Intraepithelial Neoplasia (CIN). CIN may develop into cancer in a period of time and without proper treatments.

\*(70% of cervical cancer is caused by HPV types 16 and 18).

The development of normal cervical cells to cervical cancer



### Risk factors of HPV infection/ cervical cancer

Tobacco smoking

Long-term use of oral contraceptive pills for more than 5 years

Weakened immunity

Multiple sexual partners (The higher risk with the higher number of sex partners a woman or her partner has)

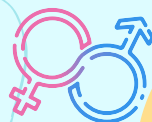
Have had sex before (Sexual intercourse at an early age, High number of childbirths or young age at first pregnancy are at higher risk)

## The common symptoms

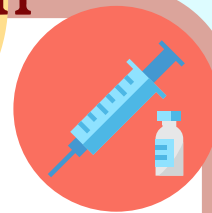
Early-stage of cancer may produce no symptoms at all.



- Irregular vaginal bleeding
  - Between periods
  - During or after sex
  - After menopause
- Foul-smelling vaginal discharge
- Pelvic pain, backache
- Blood in urine or pain on passing urine
- Leg swelling
- General tiredness and weight loss



## Prevention



- Have a regular cervical screening
- Receive HPV vaccine before initiation of sexual activity
- Practice safer sex to reduce the chance of HPV infection/ STDs
  - Use condoms
  - Avoid having multiple sexual partners
- Do not smoke



## Cervical Screening

- Include: Human papillomavirus (HPV) test / Cytology test (also called Pap smear)
- It is a quick and simple test for detecting early abnormal changes in the cervix. If the test result shows abnormal cells, further investigation (e.g. colposcopy) is usually required.
- During the screening, an instrument called speculum is inserted into the vagina and then a soft brush is inserted to collect the sample from the cervix. The sample will be sent to laboratory for processing.



- \* For Asymptomatic Women at Average Risk aged 25 to 64 who ever had sexual experience should have regular cervical screening.
- \* For Women at Increased Risk may require more frequent screenings based on the doctor's assessment.

You should consult a doctor as soon as possible if you develop any symptoms, even if your latest cervical screening result is normal.

### References:

Department of Health  
Cancer fund  
Hospital Authority - Smart patient

The above information is for reference only.

Editor: MingYi Man

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