

HPV Vaccination

The HPV vaccine is given as a series of 3 injections into the upper arm muscle. It should be given with a 6 month period.

The vaccine is most effective when all 3 doses have been given. Missed doses should be given as soon as possible.

This vaccine is often offered to high school students ideally before they become sexually active. If you have not had the vaccine and would like it, talk with your GP.



Pap Smear Register

This register keeps a confidential history of your Pap Smear results and send you a reminder if you are overdue for your next Pap.

Results of your Pap are automatically sent to the register.

If you do not wish to have your details forwarded to the register you can tell your doctor or clinician at the time of your Pap.

For more information please contact the Queensland Pap Smear Register on 1800 777 790

Queensland AIDS Council would like to acknowledge Zest Health Action Group in the development of this resource.

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QuAC Brisbane

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Eagle Farm BC QLD 4009

(07) 3017 1777

Clinic 30

For appointments:

Call (07) 3017 1777

QuAC Cairns

290 Draper Street, Cairns QLD 4870

PO Box 12112,

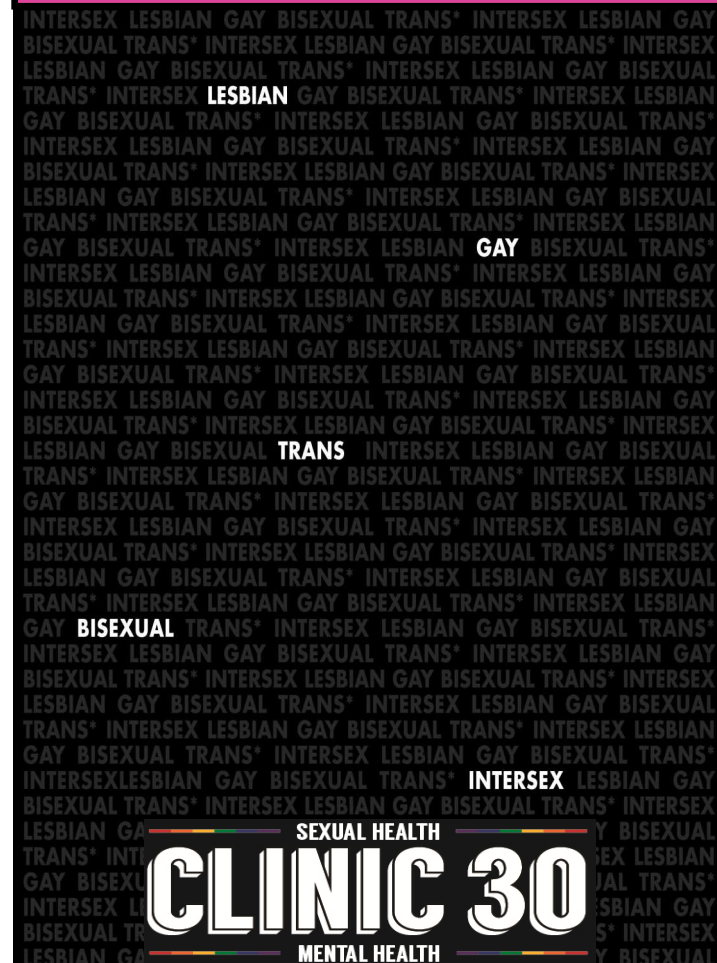
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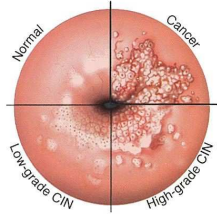


QUEENSLAND AIDS COUNCIL
LESBIAN GAY BISEXUAL TRANS INTERSEX

Highlighting Health: Cervix Care



Cervix examination:



What causes cervical cancer?

The cause of almost all cancer of the cervix is long term infection caused by some types of Human PapillomaVirus (HPV). There are over 100 types of HPV affecting various parts of the body but only a few are linked to cancer of the cervix. Most people with HPV will not develop cancer of the cervix. In most cases the body's immune system will clear the virus in one to two years. Increasing age, smoking and lowered immunity are also linked with greater risk of developing cancer of the cervix.

What does it mean if I have HPV?

Exposure to HPV can be considered a normal part of being a sexually active person. Most people only become aware of the fact they have HPV when they have an abnormal Pap Smear result or if genital warts appear. In a small number of people HPV stays in the cells of the cervix. If HPV is not cleared there is an increased risk of cancer of the cervix developing. This usually takes a long time—often more than 10 years.

Other risk factors for cervical cancer:

Age, Smoking, Persistent HPV infection and not having regular testing.

About half of the new cases of cervical cancer are in people over 50 years of age also people that smoke are known to be at greater risk than non-smokers.

Tips for having a Pap Smear:

Your body, your choice.

- ◆ You do not have to have anyone in the room that you do not want there. This means that if you want a female doctor, you can not be forced to see a male doctor and vice versa.
 - ◆ You do not have to agree to a specific person assisting the doctor or clinician. You can refuse to have any particular person in the room for any reason.
 - ◆ None of the clinic staff should be present when you are undressing or while you are putting your clothes back on.
 - ◆ You may want to watch. Most doctors will have a mirror available for you to use.
 - ◆ The doctor or clinician touching your genitals must wear gloves.
- If you are allergic to latex, you need to inform the clinician so that they can use latex-free gloves.
- ◆ You can ask the doctor or clinician to tell you exactly what they are doing throughout the exam. If it is your first visit, they must do this.
 - ◆ You are free to ask questions any time!
 - ◆ The doctor or clinician must do any tests on you that you ask for, as long as they are capable of performing these tests.



- ◆ You may bring a family member, partner or friend to support you during the exam.
 - ◆ Your voice should be heard, you can tell the doctor or clinician what would make you most comfortable for example for them to go more slowly, pausing if you need to relax.
- You can stop the exam at anytime!
- ◆ If at anytime the clinician does anything that makes you uncomfortable, you can leave.
 - ◆ If it is your first exam, tell the doctor or clinician.
 - ◆ If it is your first exam and you are nervous, talk to other people in your circle of friends and family that may have had it done before.
 - ◆ The more you breathe and relax the easier it will be for you and the doctor or clinician. It should not hurt, so if you are finding it uncomfortable take some deep breaths and try and relax. Talking can also relax the pelvic muscles so try chatting with the doctor or clinician.

Transmen need Pap Smears too

Ensure that you are comfortable with the doctor or clinician you are seeing and ask for them to conduct the Pap for you.

Because Testosterone changes your body, you will need to use a topical oestrogen cream on the cervix for two weeks prior to the Pap otherwise an abnormal result and you will need to go through the process again.

Make sure you take time for self care afterwards. It can be a very confronting time—reward yourself!