



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

How Often to Get a Pap Test

Cervical Cancer Screening Among Women Aged >30 Years, With or Without a History of Hysterectomy – United States, 2000-2010

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[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[Dr. Bowen] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the *MMWR*, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm Dr. Anna Bowen, filling in for your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

Cervical cancer has declined in the US and the decline is largely due to Pap testing and follow-up. Screening recommendations have changed.

Meg Watson is a researcher with the CDC's Division of Cancer Prevention and Control. She's joining us today to discuss Pap testing. Welcome to the show, Meg.

[Ms.Watson] Thank you, Anna.

[Dr. Bowen] Meg, how common is cervical cancer?

[Ms.Watson] Well, cervical cancer used to be more common but rates have declined. Still, about 12,000 women are diagnosed and 4,000 women die from it each year. It is one of the most preventable cancers. Screening and follow-up of abnormalities are key to prevention.

[Dr. Bowen] When should women begin to get screened for cervical cancer?

[Ms.Watson] Beginning at age 21, women should get a Pap test every three years. At age 30, women can choose to continue or can have a human papillomavirus, or HPV, test, along with a Pap test and extend their screening intervals to every five years. Routine annual screening is no longer recommended.

[Dr. Bowen] When should women stop getting Pap tests?

[Ms.Watson] Women should stop getting tested after the age of 65 if they have a history of normal Pap test screenings, or at any age after a total hysterectomy, which removes the uterus and cervix, unless the hysterectomy was done for reasons related to cancer. Some women have additional risk factors. Check with your doctor before stopping screening.

[Dr. Bowen] Where can listeners get more information about cervical cancer?

[Ms.Watson] Listeners can go to cdc.gov/cancer/cervical.

[Dr. Bowen] Thanks, Meg. I've been talking today with CDC's Meg Watson about screening to detect cervical cancer.

Beginning at age 21, women should have a Pap test every *three* years. At age 30, they can choose to get a Pap test *and* an HPV, or human papillomavirus, test and extend screenings to every *five* years. Most women can stop getting screened after age 65 or after a total hysterectomy, unless it was related to cancer. All women should talk to their health care provider and develop a plan for screening for cervical cancer.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Anna Bowen for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.