CERVICAL CANCER SCREENING

All women with a uterus and cervix are at risk for cervical cancer. It occurs most often in women over age 30 although younger women can develop this cancer as well. Cervical cancer is highly preventable because screening tests (such as the Pap test) to find precancers early, and vaccines to prevent HPV infections are available. When cervical cancer is found early, it is highly treatable and associated with long survival and good quality of life.

Screening Tests

Two tests can help prevent cervical cancer or find it early—

- The Pap test (or Pap smear) looks for precancers, cell changes on the cervix that might become cervical cancer if they are not treated appropriately.
- The HPV test looks for the virus that can cause these cell changes.

The Pap test is recommended for all women, and can easily be done in a doctor’s office or clinic. Most women should start getting regular Pap tests at age 21. In addition to the Pap test, the HPV test may be used to screen for cervical cancer, along with the Pap test, in women aged 30 years and older. There are many teenaged women these days that are being diagnosed with positive high risk HPV when their pap smears come out abnormal so this is not ONLY seen with women over the age of 30!

More Steps to Help Prevent Cervical Cancer

These things may also help lower your risk for cervical cancer—

- Don’t smoke.
- Use condoms during sex.*
- Limit your number of sexual partners.

*HPV infection can occur in both male and female genital areas that are covered or protected by a latex condom, as well as in areas that are not covered.

If you have a low income or do or do not have health insurance you can still be seen at Cactus Health Clinic to get your Pap Smear done. It’s a simple and easy procedure to have done and worth more than you can imagine to give you peace of mind. CALL the office at 432-336-8110 to schedule your appointment.

Cactus Health Care Services, Inc.

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Closed Mondays • T-W-F 9am-7pm • Thur 9am-8pm