



Indiana
Department
of
Health

Chronicle of Indiana Cancer Control

Spotlight

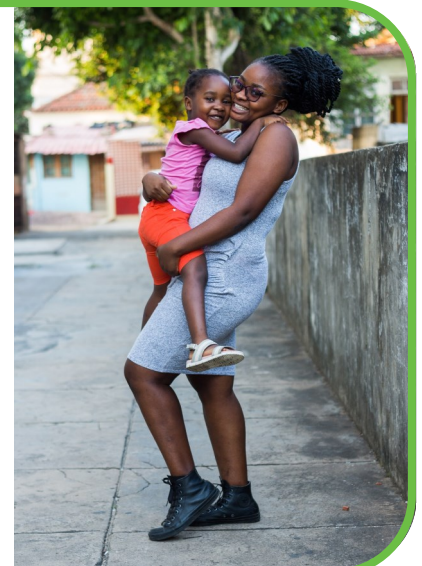
January — Cervical Cancer Awareness Month

Cancer is a disease in which cells in the body grow out of control. Cancer is always named for the part of the body where it starts, even if it spreads to other body parts later. When cancer starts in the cervix, it is called *cervical cancer*.

All women are at risk for cervical cancer. It occurs most often in women over age 30. Long-lasting infection with certain types of human papillomavirus (HPV) is the main cause of cervical cancer.

Screening tests and the HPV vaccine can help prevent cervical cancer. When cervical cancer is found early, it is highly treatable and associated with long survival and good quality of life.¹

1. www.cdc.gov/cancer/cervical/basic_info/index



Cervical cancer risks

Almost all cervical cancers are caused by human papillomavirus (HPV), a common virus that can be passed from one person to another during sex.

There are many types of HPV. Some HPV types can cause changes on a woman's cervix that can lead to cervical cancer over time, while other types can cause genital or skin warts.

HPV is so common that most people get it at some time in their lives. HPV usually causes no symptoms so you can't tell that you have it. For most women, HPV will go away on its own; however, if it does not, there is a chance that over time it may cause cervical cancer.

Other things that can increase your risk of cervical cancer—

- Having [HIV](#) (the virus that causes AIDS) or another condition that makes it hard for your body to fight off health problems
- [Smoking](#)
- Using birth control pills for a long time (five or more years)
- Having given birth to three or more children
- Having several sexual partners²

2. www.cdc.gov/cancer/cervical/basic_info/risk_factors

Resources

Testing

Depending on your age, your doctor may recommend you have a Pap test, an HPV test, or both tests together.



- The Pap test (or Pap smear) looks for precancers (abnormal cell changes) on the cervix that can be treated, so that cervical cancer may be prevented. The Pap test also can find cervical cancer early, when treatment is most effective. The Pap test only screens for cervical cancer. It does not screen for any other gynecologic cancer.
- The HPV test looks for HPV—the virus that can cause precancerous cell changes and cervical cancer.³

Where to find free or low-cost cervical cancer screening tests.

If a person has a low income or does not have insurance, they may be able to get a free or low-cost cervical cancer screening test through the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program.

To learn more about the program in Indiana, call **317-233-7901** or visit health.in.gov and search “BCCP.”

Screening and vaccines save lives³

- See your doctor regularly for a Pap and/or HPV test
- Follow up with your doctor if your cervical cancer screening test results are not normal
- Get the HPV vaccine. It protects against the types of HPV that most often cause cervical, vaginal, and vulvar cancers. It is recommended for preteens (both boys and girls) ages 11 to 12, but can be given as early as age 9 and until age 26. The vaccine is given in a series of either two or three shots, depending on age. *It is important to note that even women who are vaccinated against HPV need to have regular Pap tests to screen for cervical cancer.*

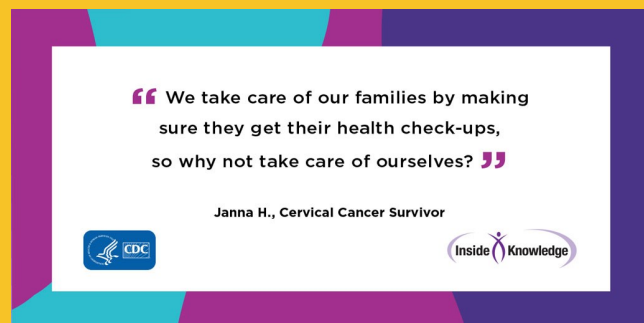
To learn more about the HPV vaccine visit www.cdc.gov/hpv.

When to get tested for cervical cancer

The Pap test is one of the most reliable and effective cancer screening tests available. The Pap test is recommended for all women between the ages of 21 and 29. If your Pap test results are normal, your doctor may say that you will not need another Pap test for three years.

If you are 30 or older, you may choose to have a Pap test, an HPV test, or both tests together. If the results are normal, your chance of getting cervical cancer in the next few years is very low. Your doctor may then say that you can wait up to five years for your next screening.³

3. www.cdc.gov/cancer/knowledge



Tools, resources and graphics can be found online at CDC's Cervical Cancer Resources to Share page:

www.cdc.gov/cancer/cervical/resources

Facts and figures

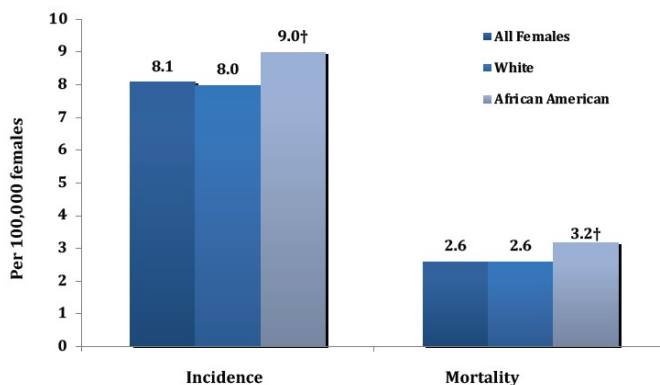
The burden of cervical cancer in Indiana⁴

- Indiana females are most often diagnosed with cervical cancer during their middle adult years. During 2017, 85 percent of cervical cancer cases occurred among Indiana females younger than 65, while 47 percent was among females between 45 and 64. Females between the ages of 25 and 44 accounted for 37.5 percent of cases.
- In 2019, only 41.2 percent of adolescents ages 13 to 17 in Indiana were up-to-date on receiving their shots for the HPV vaccine.

PERCENT OF INVASIVE CERVICAL CANCER CASES BY STAGE OF DIAGNOSIS AND RACE INDIANA, 2008 –2017

Note: Excludes in situ
Source: Indiana State Cancer Registry

*Age-adjusted to the US 2000 Standard Population.
†Rate among African American females is significantly higher (P<.05) than the rate among white females
Source: Indiana State Cancer Registry



- From 2008 to 2017, African American females in Indiana, compared to white females, had a 12 percent higher cervical cancer incidence rate (9.0 versus 8.0 cases per 100,000 females, respectively) and a 21 percent higher mortality rate (3.2 versus 2.6 deaths per 100,000 females, respectively).

- While many factors impact this disparity, one issue is that African American females tend to be diagnosed at a non-localized stage. Furthermore, national data suggests that, after excluding women who have had hysterectomies, the race-based disparities in cervical cancer mortality are even greater.

- In Indiana, from 2008 to 2012 to 2013 to 2017, the incidence of cervical cancer has increased while the mortality rate remained constant.

4. Indiana Cancer Facts and Figures 6th Edition, <https://indianacancer.org/wp->

To promote, protect, and improve the health and safety of all Hoosiers

Indiana Department of Health

2 North Meridian Street • Indianapolis, Indiana 46204 • 317-233-1325 • health.in.gov

