



Cervical Cancer

*Learn How It Affects Vietnamese
Women in the United States and
How It Can Be Prevented*

A photograph of four women of various ages and ethnicities, smiling and looking towards the camera. They are positioned on the left side of the slide. The background is a soft, out-of-focus image of a modern building with a glass facade. The text 'About Cancer ...' is written in a bold, blue, serif font on the right side of the slide.

About Cancer ...

What Is Cancer?

- Cancer is a group of diseases that have to do with the overgrowth of cells.
- Cancer happens when cells in a certain part or parts of the body stop dying in a normal way.

Cells are the small units that make up living things, including the human body.

A person's body is made up of billions of cells.

When cells grow old or become damaged, they normally die and are replaced with new ones.

What Causes Cancer?

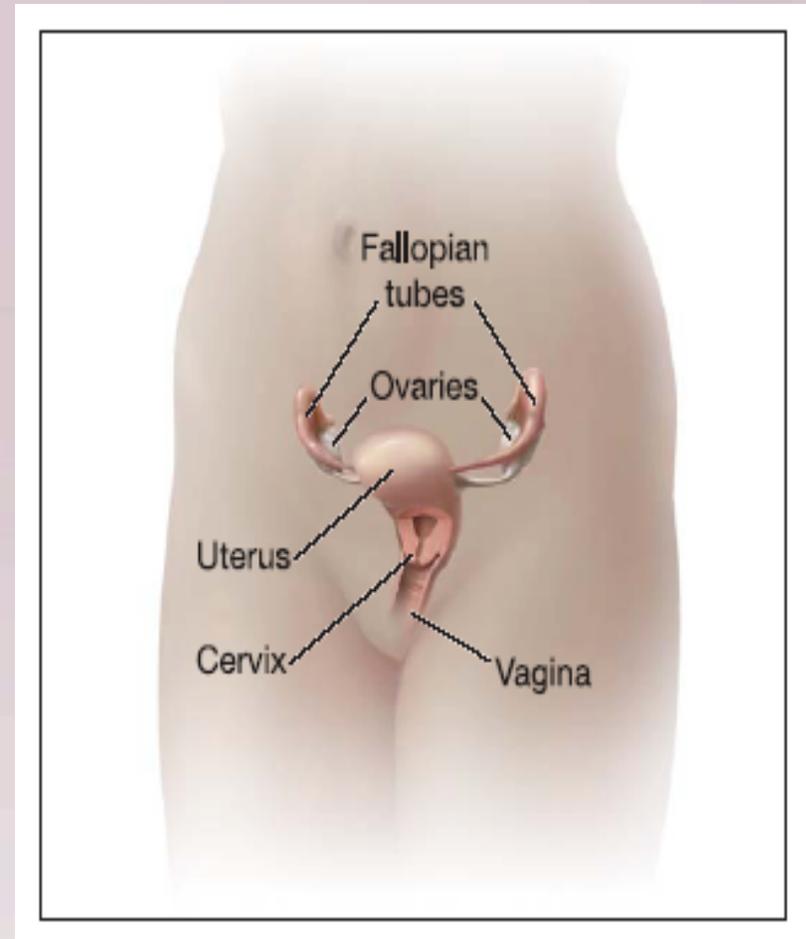
- Not all causes of cancer are known. But scientists have been able to find many of them.
- For example, cancer may be caused by certain:
 - Genetic factors
 - Lifestyle factors
 - Smoking
 - Sun exposure
 - Chemicals
 - Such as asbestos in the environment
 - Viruses & bacteria

About Cervical Cancer...



What is Cervical Cancer?

- Cancer can happen in almost any part of the body.
- One of the parts of the body where cancer can develop is in a woman's cervix.



This image shows a woman's reproductive organs.

How Common Is Cervical Cancer?

- Every year in the United States, about ...
 - 10,000 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer.
 - 4,000 women die from cervical cancer.

How Does It Affect Vietnamese Women?

- Cervical cancer is the most common type of cancer among Vietnamese women in the United States.
- Vietnamese women are over five times more likely to be diagnosed with invasive cervical cancer than non-Hispanic white women.

What Causes Cervical Cancer?

- The main cause of cervical cancer is a virus.
- This virus is called HPV (human papillomavirus).

What is HPV?

- HPV is a virus spread through sexual contact.
 - HPV can be spread from one person to another even when a condom is used.

What is HPV?

- HPV is a common virus in women and men.
 - HPV usually has no symptoms, so a person may be infected with HPV and not know it.

What is HPV?

- HPV infections can lead to cervical cancer.
 - Most HPV infections go away on their own. But when HPV stays in the body, it can cause abnormal changes in the cells of the cervix that, over many years, could turn into cancer.

How Can A Woman Help Prevent Cervical Cancer?

- Abnormal changes in the cells of the cervix can be detected early, before they turn into cancer.
 - This can be done with a Pap test.

How Can A Woman Help Prevent Cervical Cancer?

- Getting a Pap test on a regular basis can help women prevent cervical cancer.
- A Pap test can also detect cervical cancer early, increasing the chance of survival.

Research Shows

- Most cases of cervical cancer occur in women who:
 - Have never had a Pap test.
 - Have not had a Pap test within the past 5 years.

What Is a Pap Test?

- A Pap test is a simple, fast, and routine procedure.
- Doctors and other specially trained health care professionals, such as nurses, may perform Pap tests.

What Is a Pap Test?

- It is done during a pelvic exam, but it is not the same.
 - In a pelvic exam, the doctor feels a woman's reproductive organs to find out if there is something abnormal in their shape or size.
 - In a Pap test, the doctor uses a small, soft brush to take a sample of cells from the cervix.

What Is a Pap Test?

- The doctor then sends the sample to a laboratory to find out if there are abnormal cell changes that may lead to cancer or that may already be cancer.

Pap Test Results

- If precancerous changes are found...
 - They can be treated before they turn into cancer.
- If cancer is found...
 - It can be treated early, increasing the chance for survival.

More About the Pap Test

- About 55 million Pap tests are performed each year in the United States.
- Of these, about 3.5 million (6%) are abnormal and require medical follow-up.

More About the Pap Test

- It is important to remember that even when the results of the Pap test show abnormal findings, it does not usually mean that the woman has cancer.
- Most abnormal findings require only follow-up or minor treatment.
- A woman should talk to her doctor about her Pap test result and what the result means.

When Should Women Get a Pap Test?

- Women should have their first Pap test:
 - About 3 years after beginning to have sex.
 - No later than age 21, even if they are not having sex.

When Should Women Get a Pap Test?

- Women should then continue to get a Pap test:
 - At least once every 3 years.
 - Some women may need to get tested more often. This will depend on the result of previous Pap tests.
 - Women aged 65 and older should talk to their doctors about whether they need to continue getting Pap tests.

Where Can Women Get a Pap Test?

- Women can get a Pap test at the:
 - Doctor's Office
 - Clinic or Community Health Center
 - Local Health Department
- To find out where they can get a free or low-cost Pap test, women can call the National Cancer Institute's Cancer Information Service at 1-800-4-CANCER

Pap Testing Among Vietnamese Women

- Vietnamese women in the United States have a low rate of screening for cervical cancer.
- Many Vietnamese women report that they have never had a Pap test or that they do not get a Pap test on a regular basis.

Barriers to Pap Tests Among Vietnamese Women

- Lack of knowledge about cervical cancer and the benefit of the Pap test
- Belief that only married women should have the Pap test
- Embarrassment
- Fear
- Fatalistic attitude

Barriers to Pap Tests Among Vietnamese Women

- Access to health care
 - No health insurance
 - No regular health care provider
 - No physician referral or recommendation of Pap test
 - Cost
- Language
 - Little to no English proficiency

Scenario #1



I am embarrassed to ask for a Pap Test.
What should I do?

Excerpts from Cervical Cancer: What Vietnamese Women Should Know (Benh Ung Thu Co Tu Cung: Nhung Dieu Phu Nu Viet Nam Can Bie), a publication from the National Cancer Institute.

Scenario #1



Many women are embarrassed to remind their doctors to do Pap tests. Because of our culture, we are not used to talking about sexual matters and intimate body parts. So, it takes a brave woman to ask her doctor for a Pap test, especially if her doctor is a man. You can ask for a female provider, such as a nurse, to be in the room. For your health, try not to be embarrassed — simply ask your doctor to do a Pap test.

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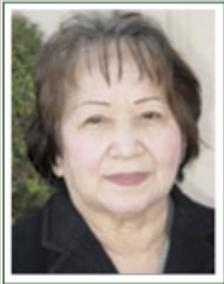
Scenario #2



If someone you know does not speak English, she can ask for an interpreter when she schedules her appointment. She can also ask that the results of the test be sent in Vietnamese. Or, she can ask that an interpreter call to give her the results.

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Scenario #3



If I have no symptoms, why should I go see my doctor?

Excerpts from Cervical Cancer: What Vietnamese Women Should Know (Benh Ung Thu Co Tu Cung: Nhung Dieu Phu Nu Viet Nam Can Bie), a publication from the National Cancer Institute.

Scenario #3



Many women may have cervical cancer without knowing it because there are no symptoms at first. I tell all women to make an appointment to get a Pap test even if they have no symptoms. Remember, if it is detected early, cervical cancer can be cured almost 100 percent of the time.

Excerpts from Cervical Cancer: What Vietnamese Women Should Know (Benh Ung Thu Co Tu Cung: Nhung Dieu Phu Nu Viet Nam Can Bie), a publication from the National Cancer Institute.

Remember:

- When women get a Pap test on a regular basis they can ...
 - Prevent cervical cancer.
 - Detect cervical cancer early and increase their chances of being cured.

For More Information

- The National Cancer Institute has published a new booklet to inform Vietnamese women about cervical cancer and the importance of getting a Pap test on a regular basis.
- To order free copies:
 - Phone:
1-800-4-CANCER
(1-800-422-6237)
 - Online:
<http://www.cancer.gov>

