WHAT IS CERVICAL CANCER?

• Cancer that begins in the cells of the cervix.
• Abnormal cell growth that forms a mass or a lump.
• Can spread to lymph nodes and other parts of the body.

Who gets cervical cancer?
• It occurs most often in women over age 30.

What are the symptoms?
• Early stages may have no symptoms.
• Abnormal vaginal bleeding, such as bleeding after vaginal sex, and bleeding after menopause.
• Discharge from the vagina with an odor.
• Pain in the pelvic area.
• Pain during sex.

Can it be found early?
• The best way to find cervical cancer early is to have regular pap test (which may be combined with a test for human papillomavirus (HPV)).
• Be aware of any signs and symptoms to avoid delays in getting a test.
• Finding cancer early increases successful treatment.

What can I do to reduce my risk?
• Get a HPV vaccine.
• All preteens who are 11 to 12 years old should get a HPV vaccine.
• Everyone through 26 years old, should get a HPV vaccine if not done already.
• The HPV vaccine should be given to everyone by the age of 26 years old.
• Do not use (commercial) tobacco.
• Use condom during sex.
• Limit your number of sexual partners.

Who should get tested?
• All women starting at age 21.
• Every 3 years, all women ages 21-29 need a pap test.
• At age 30, women should get a pap test along with a HPV test every 5 years if both test results are normal.

What tests are available?
Talk to your doctor about which test are right for you.
• Pap test is a procedure used to collect cells from the cervix and sent to the lab to find cancer and pre-cancerous cells.
• The HPV test looks for the high-risk HPV types that may cause cervical cancer. The test can be done at the same time as the Pap test.

If you are 21-65 years old, talk to your care provider or call your local IHS, tribal or urban Indian health clinic to get a Pap test.