



Abnormal Pap Test (What Does It Mean?)

A simple Pap test can save your life!

The Abnormal Pap Test - What does it mean?

An Abnormal Pap Test does not mean that you have cancer. During a Pap Test cells are collected from your cervix, sent to a lab and looked at under a microscope. An abnormal Pap Test means that there are some changes in the size or shape of these cells.

- Early cell changes on the cervix are called abnormal cells, not cancer.
- For most women, abnormal cells change back to normal cells on their own.
- A regular Pap Test will find these cell changes early and follow-up treatment can begin.
- If you have an abnormal Pap test, or pre-cancerous cells, make sure you carry through with all follow-up treatments.

Pap Test results fall into three groups...

Negative:

- The cells of your cervix are normal shape and size; continue to have a regular Pap Test.

Cell Changes:

- Some cells on your cervix have changes in size and shape.
- These changes may be due to infection, inflammation or the presence of HPV (Human Papilloma Virus).
- Pre-cancerous changes to the cells of the cervix that can be treated. These changes fall into 5 categories:
 - ASC-US : mild cell changes
 - ASC-H: mild cell changes but favor serious change
 - LSIL: moderate cell changes
 - HSIL: serious cell changes
 - AGC: glandular cells in the cervix that are not normal

Cancer:

- Severe cell changes on your cervix that need special treatment. It is important to work with your doctor to treat your cancer.

What do I do?

- Talk to your doctor or your health care provider about your choices and what you may need to do.
- Most cell changes of the cervix return to normal on their own. Often, the next step is to have a repeat Pap Test in 3-6 months.
- Some women may be sent to see another doctor (gynecologist) for more tests and/or other types of treatment.
- Keep all follow-up appointments and treatments.
- Remember a regular Pap Test can prevent almost all cancer of the cervix.

What can I do to prevent cancer of the cervix?

- Protect yourself; always use a condom(s).
- If you are a teen - delay intercourse.
- Avoid tobacco smoke.
- Talk to our health care provider about the risk of HPV infections.
- Practice a healthy lifestyle.
- Make a regular Pap Test part of your health care plan.

For more information please contact your health care provider, community health nurse or call 1-866-643-8719
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