All women are at risk for cervical cancer, most often in women over age 30. Human papillomavirus (HPV) is the main cause. HPV is a common virus that is passed from one person to another during sex. In addition, more than four out of every 10 cases of cancers caused by HPV occur among men. Pap tests and HPV tests can help find cervical cancer early and the HPV vaccine can help prevent cervical cancer.

WHERE DO I GO TO GET TESTED FOR CERVICAL CANCER OR GET AN HPV SHOT?

When cervical cancer is found early, it is highly treatable and you can expect to live a long, good life. You can be tested for cervical cancer or get a HPV shot at your local Community Health Center or another health care facility. To find a health center, visit www.chc-ar.org/health-center-list or call 501-374-8225.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PREVENTION OF CERVICAL CANCER

- Girls and boys ages 9-12 should start getting their HPV shot.
- Females and males ages 13-26 who have not received the HPV shot or who haven’t gotten all their doses should get the vaccine as soon as possible. Getting the shot in your late teens or 20s carries a lesser chance of prevention.
- The American Cancer Society (ACS) says that people ages 26 and older don’t need to get an HPV shot.
- Women should be getting regular Pap tests. 16% of women ages 21-44 in Arkansas have not received a Pap test in the last 3 years.

RISK FACTORS FOR 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 partners.

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