

TIP OF THE MONTH

January 2011

2011 Monthly Health Observances

January
Cervical Health Awareness Month

February
American Heart Month

March
National Nutrition Month

April
Alcohol Awareness Month

May
National High Blood Pressure Education Month

June
Men's Health Month

July
UV Safety Month

August
Children's Eye Health and Safety Month

September
Prostate Cancer Awareness Month

October
Breast Cancer Awareness Month

November
American Diabetes Month

December
Safe Toys and Gifts Month

January Is Cervical Health Awareness Month



This month marks the beginning of Cervical Health Awareness Month, a month dedicated to raising awareness about the prevention of cervical cancer.

Cervical cancer is currently the second-leading cause of cancer death among women worldwide. The American Cancer Society estimated that over 9,000 women would be diagnosed with the disease in 2008 and over 3,000 would die from it in the U.S. alone.

Six Ways To Prevent Cervical Cancer Reducing Your Risk of Cervical Cancer

Cervical cancer is one of the most preventable types of cancer. Because of the Pap smear test, the number of cervical cancer cases has dropped over the past twenty years.

While some cases of cervical cancer cannot be prevented, there are many things a woman can do to reduce her risk of developing cervical cancer. How to reduce your risk of cervical cancer:

1. **Get a regular Pap smear.** The Pap smear can be the greatest defense for cervical cancer. The Pap smear can detect cervical changes early before they turn into cancer. Check cervical cancer screening guidelines to find out how often you should have a Pap smear, or check with your doctor.
2. **Limit the amount of sexual partners you have.** Studies have shown women who have many sexual partners increase their risk for cervical cancer. They also are increasing their risk of developing HPV, a known cause for cervical cancer.
3. **Quit smoking or avoid secondhand smoke.** Smoking cigarettes increases your risk of developing many cancers, including cervical cancer. Smoking combined with an HPV infection can actually accelerate cervical dysplasia. Your best bet is to kick the habit.
4. **If you are sexually active, use a condom.** Having unprotected sex puts you at risk for HIV and other STD's which can increase your risk factor for developing cervical cancer.
5. **Follow up on abnormal Pap smears.** If you have had an abnormal Pap smear, it is important to follow up with regular Pap smears or colposcopies, whatever your doctor has decided for you. If you have been treated for cervical dysplasia, you still need to follow up with Pap smears or colposcopies. Dysplasia can return and when undetected, can turn into cervical cancer.
6. **Get the HPV vaccine.** If you are under 27, you may be eligible to receive the HPV vaccine, which prevents high risk strains of HPV in women. The HPV vaccine, Gardasil, was approved by the FDA to give to young girls as young as 9. The vaccine is most effective when given to young women before they become sexually active.