

of treatments you need depends on how much tissue must be removed.

- Medications can be applied to treat external warts. Some medications prompt your immune system to rally against HPV. Others are caustic agents that destroy warts. Medications may be applied at the doctor's office or at home.
- Other treatments are being developed as more is learned about HPV. Researchers are even working on an HPV vaccine. Ask your healthcare provider about new treatments that may be available.



Dysplasia or warts can be removed using a heated wire loop. Other treatments are also available.



Medications can be applied to treat warts. These can only be used on external warts.

Ways to Stay Healthy

Although some strains of HPV are linked to cervical cancer, most people with HPV don't develop cancer. Following up with your healthcare provider and keeping your immune system healthy help reduce the cancer risk even more.

Follow-Up

- Schedule follow-up visits as instructed. See your healthcare provider if you notice any new warts.
- Have Pap tests as often as your healthcare provider tells you to. This way any dysplasia is found early, when treatment works best.

Keep Your Immune System Strong

- Eating 5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day helps lower your risk of many types of cancer. Research shows that folic acid (found in whole grains, beans, and broccoli) may help prevent cervical cancer.
- Smoking weakens the immune system, which makes you more susceptible to HPV. Smoking also increases the risk of cervical and other types of cancer.
- When you're well rested, your immune system is better equipped to fight viruses such as HPV.

Ways to Stay To Protected Against HPV

If you have sex, the best way to prevent the spread of HPV is to use a latex condom every time. But remember that condoms and other barriers only protect the skin they cover. If you're with someone new, talk about HPV and other sexually transmitted diseases before you have sex. If you're in a committed relationship and aren't currently using condoms, you may not need to change your habits. Talk to your partner and make a choice that feels right to both of you.

CONDITION Ways to Stay protected against HPV



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This brochure is not intended as a substitute for
professional dental care.

What Is Genital HPV?

HPV (human papilloma-virus) is a very common family of viruses. Some strains of genital HPV can cause abnormal changes in the cells of a woman's cervix. In a small number of women, these changes can lead to cancer if not treated. Also, certain strains of HPV can cause genital warts (condyloma). Although many people carry HPV, it often causes no symptoms. The virus may first be detected when signs of dysplasia or warts are found during a Pap test.

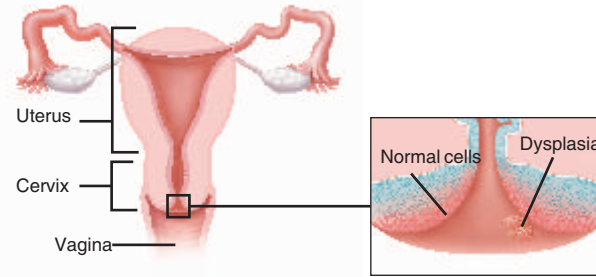


How Does HPV Spread?

HPV lives inside skin and mucous membranes. It spreads when skin carrying the virus touches other skin. Genital HPV most often spreads during sexual contact. Condoms and other barriers help protect against the spread by preventing skin contact. But condoms may not cover all affected skin, so they may not provide complete protection. There is no cure for HPV. Even if symptoms go away, the virus may remain in the body. Because it often doesn't cause symptoms, many people who have HPV don't even know it.

When Dysplasia Occurs

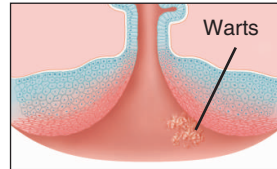
The cervix is the narrow canal at the bottom of the uterus. It's made up of layers of cells that normally change as they grow. Dysplasia occurs when HPV causes some cervical cells to change in ways that are not normal. These abnormal cells can be detected with a Pap test. Left untreated, abnormal cells can develop into cancer.



Dysplasia develops when cervical cells change in ways that are not normal.

When Warts Form

Certain strains of HPV can make skin cells reproduce more often than they should. These extra skin cells build up into warts. Warts can form on the cervix. They can also form around or inside the genitals. Treating warts helps keep HPV from spreading to sexual partners.



Warts on the cervix can be detected with a Pap test.



Warts around the genitals may be visible. These external warts can affect the vulva, vagina, and anus.

Your Diagnosis

Genital HPV is often detected during a routine exam. Your healthcare provider may ask if you are sexually active, and if you have had dysplasia or genital warts before. You may also be checked for signs of other sexually transmitted infections.



Your Exam

- **A Pap test** can show signs of dysplasia or warts on the cervix. A sample of cells is taken from the cervix and viewed under a microscope.

- **A colposcopy** may be done to see dysplasia or warts more clearly. A magnifying scope (colposcope) is used to look at the cervix through the vagina.
- **A acetowhite test** makes warts easier to see. Vinegar is applied to the cervix or other skin that may be affected. If warts are present, they turn white. This test may be done during a colposcopy.
- **A DNA test** can find out which strain of HPV you have. Abnormal cells are studied to see if you are at higher risk of cancer. This may affect your treatment plan.

Your Treatment

There is no cure for genital HPV. However, the effects of HPV can be treated. Treating dysplasia removes the cells that can lead to cancer. Treating warts may help keep you from spreading the virus to others.

Types of Treatment

- Dysplasia or warts can be removed with heat (cautery), freezing, or laser. The procedure is done by your healthcare provider. The number

If You Have Genital Warts

- The strains of HPV that cause warts are often not the same strains that lead to cancer. If you have genital warts, show them to your healthcare provider. Be aware that genital warts:
 - Can appear alone or in groups, and may be hard to see.
 - May feel like dry, firm bumps and look like a rash.
 - May look different on skin than on mucous membrane. Warts on a woman may look different from warts on a man.