



LOGAN COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

109 Third Street, P.O. Box 508
Lincoln, Illinois 62656
Phone 217-735-2317
Fax 217-732-6943
WWW.LCDPH.ORG

Public Health
Prevent · Promote · Protect

Press Release

Contact: Kara Davis
Phone: (217) 735-2317

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JANUARY IS CERVICAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), each year about 13,000 new cases of cervical cancer are diagnosed in the United States and about 4,000 women die of this cancer. Almost all cervical cancers are caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV) which is spread, most commonly, through sexual activity.

HPV is so common that most women get it at some time in their lives. Most women cannot tell if they have HPV as there are generally no symptoms. In fact, for most women, HPV will go away on its own. If HPV does not go away, it may cause cervical cancer. Symptoms for advanced cervical cancer may include bleeding in the vaginal area that would not be typically normal. If you experience symptoms, you should see your doctor.

The good news is that there are screening tests and vaccines available to prevent HPV and the development of cervical cancer. You can lower your risk for cervical cancer by getting screened regularly, starting at age 21. The HPV and Pap test are screening tests that look for the virus and cell changes that can help detect cervical cancer at an early stage. For more information regarding these screening test options, you should contact your doctor. The CDC also provides additional information at

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<https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/cervical/index.htm> regarding HPV, cervical cancer, and recommendations for screening and available vaccines.

Additionally, an HPV vaccine is available which protects against the types of HPV that most often cause cervical cancers. HPV can also cause other kinds of cancer in both men and women, so the vaccine is recommended for everyone starting as early as age 9 up to age 26. Adults, age 27 through 45 years, should consult with their doctor about their risk for new HPV infections and the possible benefits of vaccination. HPV vaccination in this age range may provide less benefit, as more people have already been exposed to HPV.

The HPV vaccination prevents new HPV infections but does not treat existing infections or diseases. This is why the HPV vaccine works best when given before any exposure to HPV. **As a precaution, the CDC still recommends that women get screened for cervical cancer regularly, even after receiving the HPV vaccine.**

The Logan County Department of Public Health offers the HPV vaccine and will bill directly for both private insurance and Medicaid. If you are over the age of 18, please check with your insurance company to see if the HPV vaccine is covered. Please get vaccinated today! The public health clinic hours of operation are Monday-Friday, 7:30 am-3:45 pm. For additional information regarding LCDPH services, you can visit their website at WWW.LCDPH.ORG or contact them at 217-735-2317.

Information Source: CDC

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