

How often do I need to get a Pap smear?

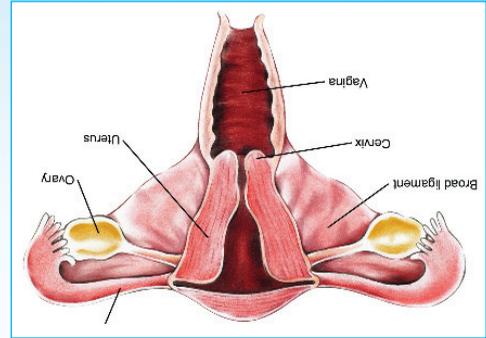
- If you are 25-54 years old and have had 2 normal Pap smear results in a row you should continue to do a Pap smear every 3 years up to age 65 years.
- If you are over 65 years old, ask your doctor if you can stop having a Pap smear.

Who needs a Pap Smear?

All women 18 years and older who have ever had sex should have a Pap smear.

Why do I need a Pap smear?

Doing a Pap smear can save your life. It can detect abnormal cervical cells before they turn into cancer cells, and with treatment, cervical cancer can be prevented. It can also detect the early stages of cervical cancer, and if treated, has a better chance of cure.



What is a Pap smear?

A Pap smear is a screening test which is an easy way to check the cervix for abnormal cell changes. It detects early changes in the cells of the cervix. The cervix is the lower part of the uterus (womb), which opens into the vagina (birth canal). If you have regular Pap smears these cell changes can be detected and treated early.

**Do your Pap smear today.
It can save your life.**

For further information

Contact Ministry of Health
2-4 King Street
Kingston
876-967-1100-5



PAP SMEAR

(OR PAP TEST)



www.moh.gov.jm

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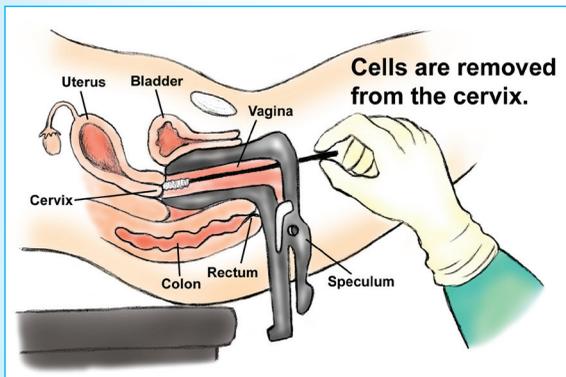
How do I prepare for a Pap smear?

To make the Pap smear as accurate as possible, it is recommended that for 2 days before the Pap smear you avoid:

- Douching
- Using tampons
- Using vaginal creams, suppositories, medicines, vaginal deodorant sprays or powders
- Having sex

You should not have a Pap test done during your menstrual period.

How is a Pap smear done?



A doctor or nurse can do a Pap smear during a pelvic examination. It is a simple and quick test. While you lie on the examination table the doctor or nurse puts an instrument called a speculum into your vagina, opening it to see the cervix. Cells are gently wiped with a soft brush or spatula from around the tiny opening in the cervix. The sample is sent to a lab where it is examined under a microscope to see if any abnormal cells are present.

Does the Pap smear hurt?

It may be a little uncomfortable but it should not be painful.

When do I get the results?

When you have the test done, you will be told how, where and approximately when you will get the results. Before you leave the doctor's office or Health Centre discuss with your healthcare provider.

What if the Pap smear is abnormal?

An abnormal Pap smear result means that changes were found on your cervix. This usually does not mean you have cervical cancer.

Some abnormal cells will turn into cancer. But sometimes these unhealthy (abnormal) cells will go away on their own. If you have an abnormal result, talk with your doctor or nurse.

Is a Pap smear the same as a pelvic exam?

No, although a Pap smear may be done as part of a pelvic exam. During a pelvic exam, the nurse or doctor will examine the reproductive organs (cervix, uterus, vagina, ovaries, and fallopian tubes) for any abnormalities.

Where do I go to have a Pap smear?

You can go to:

- A General Practitioner
- Hospitals or Health Centres
- A specialized Doctor such as a Gynaecologist
- Family Planning Clinics
- Or any Branch of the Jamaica Cancer Society