

# Have you had your smear test?

During a cervical screening, a small sample of cells are taken from your cervix for testing. This is to prevent cervical cancer by detecting and treating abnormalities in the cervix. *The test takes less than 5 minutes* and is usually conducted by a female nurse or doctor. Women receive an invitation to a cervical screening every 3 years between the ages of 25-49.

## “What happens during the procedure?”

### 5 easy steps:

1. You'll need to undress, behind a screen, from the waist down. You'll be given a sheet to put over you.
2. The nurse will ask you to lie back on a bed, usually with your legs bent, feet together and knees apart. Sometimes you may need to change position during the test.
3. They'll gently put a smooth, tube-shaped tool (a speculum) into your vagina. A small amount of lubricant may be used.
4. The nurse will open the speculum so they can see your cervix.
5. Using a soft brush, they'll take a small sample of cells from your cervix.

The nurse will close and remove the speculum and leave you to get dressed.

## The facts:

- One in three women do not attend cervical screening due to “embarrassment” about body shape.
- More than 3,200 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer every year in the UK, and nearly 900 die annually.
- 1 in 4 women skip their cervical screening. This increases to 1 in 3 between the ages of 25-29, and 1 in 2 in the most deprived areas of the UK.
- 24% of women thought they were not at risk of cervical cancer due to leading a healthy lifestyle.

## You are at risk of cervical cancer if:

- You have had the HPV vaccine
- You have only had 1 sexual partner
- You have had the same partner, or not had sex for a long time
- You're lesbian or bisexual and had sexual contact
- You're a trans man with a cervix
- You've had a partial hysterectomy that did not remove all of your cervix.