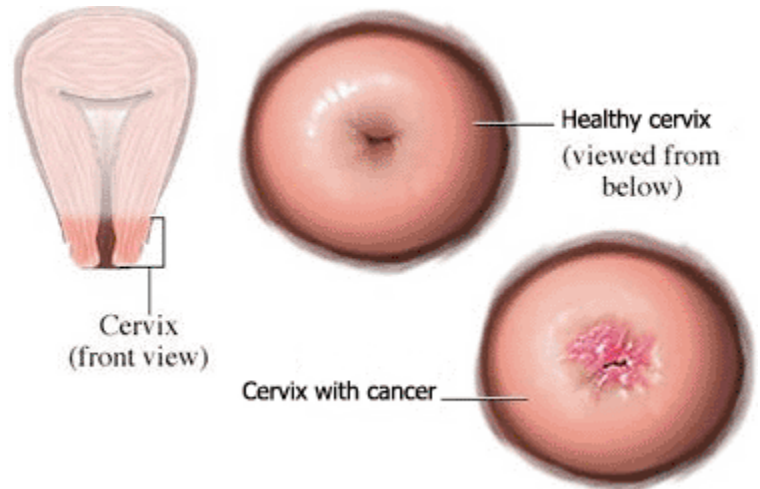
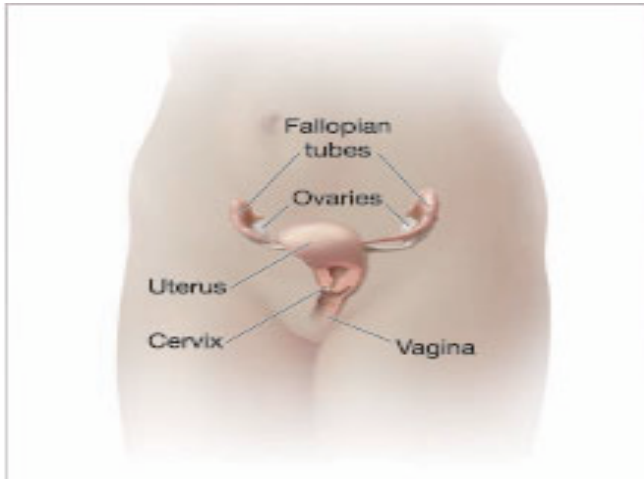




CERVICAL CANCER FACT SHEET

What is Cervical Cancer?

Cervical Cancer is a disease caused by the abnormal growth and division of cells that make up the cervix, which is the narrow, lower end of the uterus. The uterus is the hollow organ where a baby grows during a woman's pregnancy.



Risk Factors

Cervical cancer risk factors include:

- Human papilloma virus infection (HPV)
- Multiple sexual partners
- Having sex at an early age
- Smoking
- Giving birth to many children
- Oral Contraceptive use ("the Pill")
- Family history
- Diet

Symptoms

Early cervical cancer generally produces no signs or symptoms. As the cancer progresses, these signs and symptoms may appear:

- Vaginal bleeding
- Unusual vaginal discharge
- Pelvic pain
- Pain during sexual intercourse

Prevention / Early Detection

The most effective way to prevent cervical is a pelvic exam, including a **Pap test**.

A **Pap test** is a way to find abnormal changes in the cervix that could lead to cancer if left untreated.

Cervical Cancer Screening Guidelines

Beginning at the age of 21, you should have:

 **Pap test every 3 years (even if you have not had sex yet)**

If you have had sex before the age of 21:


 **Pap test 3 years after the first time you have had sex**

If you are in your 40's and above:


 **Pap test every year**

Diagnosis and Treatment

Treatment for patients with cervical cancer depends on the stage of the disease.

 **Surgery** is the removal of the cancer in an operation.

 **Radiation therapy** is a cancer treatment that uses x-rays to kill cancer cells.

 **Chemotherapy** uses drugs to stop the growth of cancer cells.

Conclusion

Asian American women have one of the highest cervical cancer rates due to the low screening rates. If more women had regular pap smears, there would be fewer advanced cases and the overall cure rate would jump to over 90 percent. Early detection of abnormal changes can save lives.

Remember early detection save lives!

For more information of our cancer screening program, please call **240-777-1409** or visit our website at **www.AAHInfo.org**.

Sources

American Cancer Society, ehealthMD, Intercultural Cancer Council, National Cancer Institute, University of Southern California.