Sagicor

BACK TO LISTING

January is Cervical Cancer Awareness Month

January 31, 2025

January highlights the importance of being aware of Cervical health. These steps below can help women prevent cervical cancer.

These steps are:

Routine testing - Pap smears, and screening begins at age 21 and continues thereafter until age 65, unless you've had a total hysterectomy or otherwise indicated by your health care provider. It is recommended that pap smear testing should be done every two-three years and for women to have both pap smear and human papillomavirus (HPV) testing from age 30.

HPV vaccination - Protects against HPV-related cancers, genital warts and most cases of cervical cancer. Most HPV infections will go away on their own. But HPV infections that don't go away can cause certain types of cancer. HPV can cause cancers of the: cervix, vagina, and vulva in women, penis in men, anus in both women and men and back of the throat. HPV vaccination prevents infections that cause these cancers.

Some symptoms of cervical cancer include:

Abnormal bleeding/spotting

Pain during intercourse

Bleeding after intercourse

Bleeding after menopause

Bleeding between regular menstrual periods

Bleeding after douching

Also:

Pelvic pain not related to your menstrual cycle.

Heavy or unusual discharge that may be watery, thick and possibly have a foul odour.

Please remember to talk about any changes and get checked by your health care provider if you have any symptoms.

To prepare for a Pap smear exam, Remember to:

1. Avoid sexual intercourse
2. Douching, vaginal creams, or other medications for at least 2 days before the test.
3. Schedule your appointment when you're not on your period.
4. Wear comfortable clothing.
5. Communicate openly with your healthcare provider about any concerns or discomfort.
6. Consider relaxation techniques like deep breathing if needed
7. You can also ask about using a smaller speculum if you anticipate discomfort.