



National Institute for Public Health  
and the Environment  
*Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport*

# Information about your cervical cancer **screening result**



# Contents

This leaflet provides information about HPV and the different screening results. Read the information about your result. You can find your result in the letter.

If you still have questions after reading the information in this leaflet, please contact your GP or visit our website:

[www.bevolkingsonderzoekbaarmoederhalskanker.nl](http://www.bevolkingsonderzoekbaarmoederhalskanker.nl)

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## Contact your GP if you have any symptoms

The test results from the population screening are not 100% certain. This means there is always a chance that HPV or abnormal cells were missed.

Are you having any of the following symptoms?

- bleeding immediately after sex;
- bleeding after the menopause, for example, if you have not had a period for over a year;
- bleeding when you are not having your period;
- abnormal vaginal discharge. For example, if it smells unpleasant. Or if the discharge is brown or red and you are not having your period.

If so, please contact your GP. Your GP can talk to you about the most suitable test in your situation.

## 1 Information about HPV

### What is HPV?

HPV is short for human papillomavirus. HPV can lead to abnormal cells in your cervix. You will not notice when you are infected with HPV. It is difficult to know who infected you. Also, you do not always know when you got infected. You may have been infected with HPV more than 10 years ago.

### What causes cervical cancer?

Over time, abnormal cells in the cervix can change into a precancerous stage of cervical cancer. Treatment at this stage can prevent cervical cancer. It takes a long time for HPV to change into cervical cancer. In most cases, this takes 10 to 15 years. Cervical cancer is not hereditary.

### How do you get it?

You can get HPV from sexual contact with someone who has HPV. You can also get HPV from touching a penis or vagina or from oral sex.

### Are there medicines against HPV?

No. The body can usually clear up the virus on its own.

### How contagious is HPV?

HPV is highly contagious. 8 out of 10 people have it at some point in their lives. You cannot actually prevent it.

### Can I become pregnant when I have HPV?

HPV does not stop you from becoming pregnant.

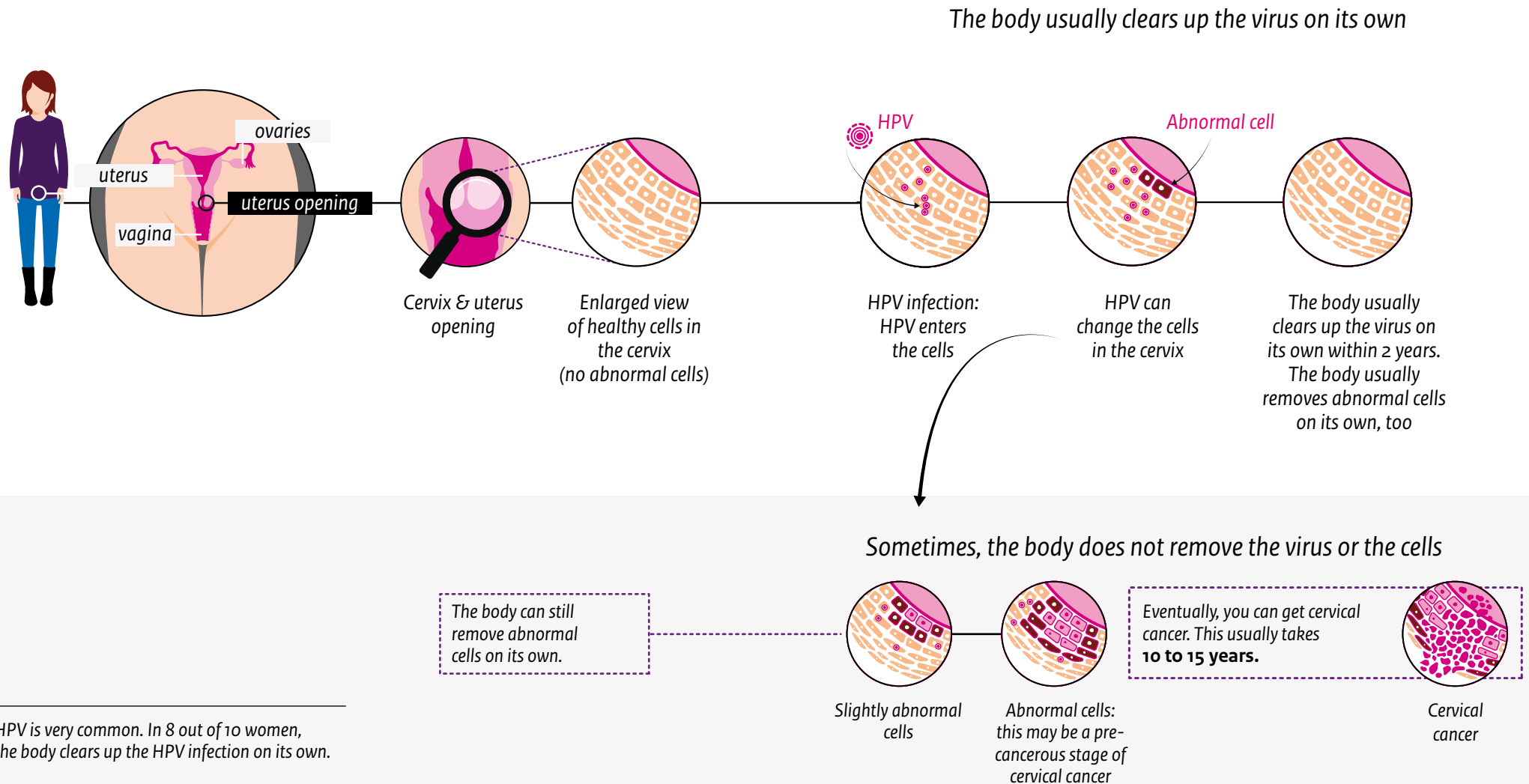
### Should I tell my partner or ex-partner that I have HPV?

You do not need to do this. Nearly everyone gets HPV at some point.

### I have been vaccinated against HPV. Can I still get HPV?

Yes. Vaccination does make the chance of getting cervical cancer much smaller. Vaccination protects against the two types of HPV that lead to cervical cancer most often.

## 2 HPV infection and the development of cervical cancer



HPV is very common. In 8 out of 10 women, the body clears up the HPV infection on its own.

### 3 Result: HPV detected, no abnormal cells

This is not serious. There is no sign that you have cervical cancer or a precursor. No treatment is required.

HPV has been detected. The body usually clears up this virus on its own. If this does not happen, HPV may change the cells in your cervix.

**To check this, it is important that you have a repeat smear test at your GP after 12 months.**

Having a repeat smear test after 12 months is safe. If abnormal cells are detected at that time, they are still easy to treat. Abnormal cells grow slowly. After 12 months, it is easier to see if the HPV infection has changed the cells in the cervix.

- For more information about this result, go to: [www.bevolkingsonderzoekbaarmoederhalskanker.nl](http://www.bevolkingsonderzoekbaarmoederhalskanker.nl)
- If you have any questions or feel worried, please contact your GP practice.



**7** out of 100 participants get this result

### Repeat smear test after 12 months

The Centre for Population Screening will automatically send you an invitation for a repeat smear test at your GP after 12 months. It is important that you then make an appointment yourself. The repeat smear test for the population screening at your GP is free of charge. The government pays for the population screening.

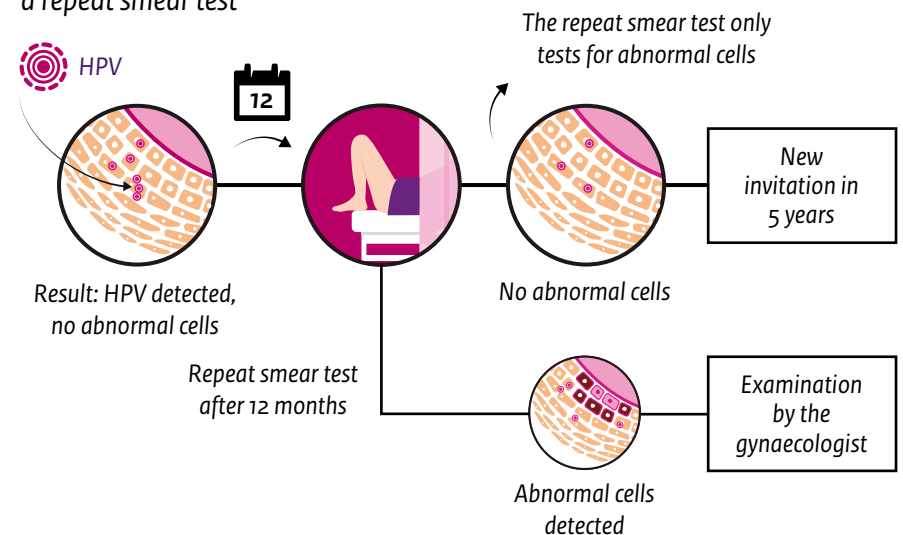
### Result of the repeat smear test

The repeat smear test will not be retested for HPV. This is because it is likely that you still have HPV. The body clears up the virus on its own within about 2 years. We check the cells in your cervix.

Most women who have a repeat smear test have healthy cells in their cervix. In that case, another examination is not needed. If no abnormal cells are detected, we will send you another invitation for population screening in 5 years.

Sometimes, abnormal cells are detected in the repeat smear test. In that case, another examination by the gynaecologist is needed.

### What happens next: a repeat smear test



## 4 Result: HPV and slightly abnormal cells detected

You have HPV. Because of this, you have slightly abnormal cells in your cervix. This is not serious. Usually, your body clears up the abnormal cells on its own. No treatment is required.

**However, it is important that you have a new smear test done by your GP after 12 months.** We can then check if your body has actually removed the slightly abnormal cells. If it has not done this and there are still slightly abnormal cells, they are still easy to treat.

- For more information about this result, go to: [www.bevolkingsonderzoekbaarmoederhalskanker.nl](http://www.bevolkingsonderzoekbaarmoederhalskanker.nl)
- If you have any questions or feel worried, please contact your GP practice.



**2** out of 100 participants get this result

### Repeat smear test after 12 months

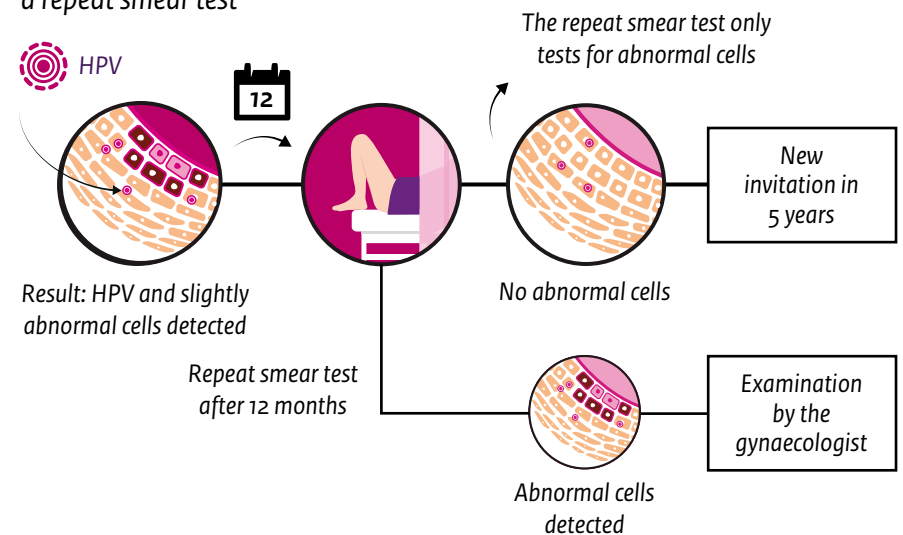
The Centre for Population Screening will automatically send you an invitation for a repeat smear test at your GP after 12 months. It is important that you then make an appointment yourself. The repeat smear test for the population screening at your GP is free of charge. The government pays for the population screening.

### Result of the repeat smear test

The repeat smear test will not be retested for HPV. We only check whether your body has indeed cleared the slightly abnormal cells by itself. If no abnormal cells are detected, we will send you another invitation for population screening in 5 years.

Sometimes, abnormal cells are detected in the repeat smear test. In that case, another examination by the gynaecologist is needed.

### What happens next: a repeat smear test



## 5 Result: HPV and abnormal cells detected

You have HPV. Because of this, abnormal cells have formed in your cervix. This means that you are at a higher risk of cervical cancer. The GP will therefore refer you to the gynaecologist.

Abnormal cells can be a precursor of cervical cancer. A precursor is not yet cervical cancer and is usually easy to treat. Treatment can prevent cervical cancer.

In some cases, the result will show cervical cancer. Early detection often makes cervical cancer easier to treat. The consequences are usually less serious. Your GP will tell you more about the result.

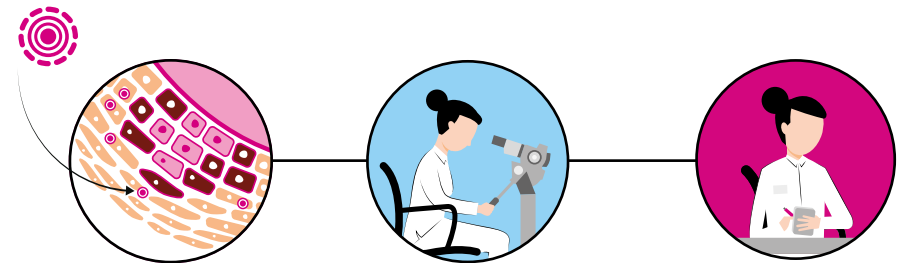
- For more information about this result, go to: [www.bevolkingsonderzoekbaarmoederhalskanker.nl](http://www.bevolkingsonderzoekbaarmoederhalskanker.nl)



**1** out of 100 participants gets this result

If you get this result, it is very important that you see a gynaecologist for another examination. The gynaecologist will use a colposcope (a type of microscope) to examine the cervix. This way, the gynaecologist can decide if you need treatment, and what kind of treatment.

**What happens next:**  
*examination at the gynaecologist*  
(see pages 12 and 13)



### Do the following:

1. Contact your GP about this result.  
The GP will refer you to the gynaecologist.
2. Write down any questions you have.
3. Before you go to the gynaecologist, watch the information video at [www.degynaecoloog.nl/informatiefilms/afwijkend-uitstrijkje-vervolgonderzoek-behandeling](http://www.degynaecoloog.nl/informatiefilms/afwijkend-uitstrijkje-vervolgonderzoek-behandeling)



You can also find more information at [www.thuisarts.nl/baarmoederhalskanker](http://www.thuisarts.nl/baarmoederhalskanker) under the heading 'Ik heb veranderde cellen in mijn uitstrijkje en ik ga naar het ziekenhuis' (I have changed cells in my smear test and am going to the hospital).

## Examination by the gynaecologist

The gynaecologist will look at the cervix to get a better idea of what is going on. If the gynaecologist sees anything that is abnormal, they will take a tissue sample. This is called a biopsy. They will then investigate the tissue further.

### Treatment

You may be treated immediately at your first appointment or given a follow-up appointment. The gynaecologist will discuss this with you.

During the treatment, the gynaecologist will remove the abnormal tissue. This is usually done under local anaesthesia. You will be given an injection that makes you feel less or no pain in that area. You will remain awake. Further treatment is usually no longer needed. Another way to treat abnormal cells is with an ointment (cream) inside the vagina. The gynaecologist will continue to monitor the situation.

You can find more information about the treatment at [www.thuisarts.nl/baarmoederhalskanker](http://www.thuisarts.nl/baarmoederhalskanker) under the heading 'Ik heb veranderde cellen in mijn uitstrijkje en ik ga naar het ziekenhuis' (I have changed cells in my smear test and am going to the hospital).

Sometimes, further treatment is needed. This depends on the seriousness of any abnormal cells. The gynaecologist will also look at the following:

- the size of the abnormal cells;
- your age;
- if you want to become pregnant in the near future.

### The population screening is free

Examination by the gynaecologist is not part of the population screening. The follow-up examination will be reimbursed by your health insurance. However, you may have to pay your excess. If you have any questions about this, please contact your healthcare insurer.

### 1 At the gynaecologist

The gynaecologist will explain the examination in more detail.

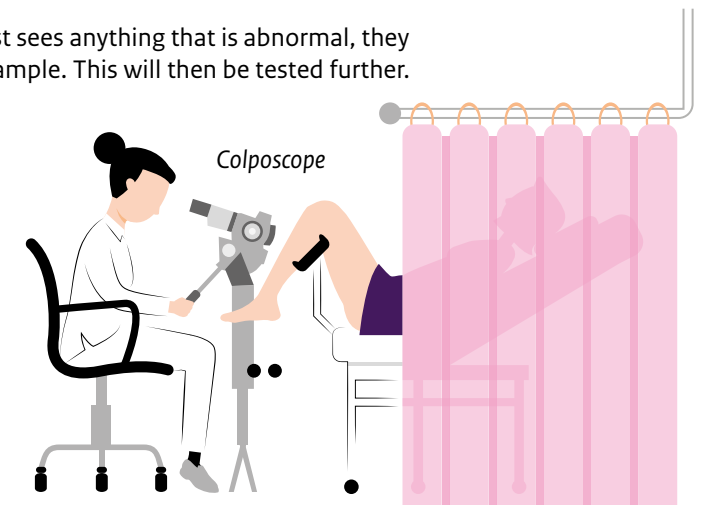


### 2 Examination

#### Colposcope

The gynaecologist will use a type of microscope to look at the tissue of the cervix.

If the gynaecologist sees anything that is abnormal, they will take a tissue sample. This will then be tested further.





## 6 More information

### More information

For more information about the population screening, HPV and cervical cancer, go to:  
[www.bevolkingsonderzoekbaarmoederhalskanker.nl](http://www.bevolkingsonderzoekbaarmoederhalskanker.nl)

Or scan the QR code using the camera on your mobile. This will take you straight to the website.



If you have any medical questions, it is best to talk to your GP or gynaecologist.

### Websites

- [www.oljff.nl](http://www.oljff.nl)
- [www.kwf.nl/baarmoederhalskanker](http://www.kwf.nl/baarmoederhalskanker)
- [www.kanker.nl/baarmoederhalskanker](http://www.kanker.nl/baarmoederhalskanker)
- [www.bevolkingsonderzoeknederland.nl](http://www.bevolkingsonderzoeknederland.nl)
- [www.thuisarts.nl/baarmoederhalskanker](http://www.thuisarts.nl/baarmoederhalskanker)

### Your details

Your test results can help to improve the population screening. The results from all participants combined give us a lot of information. That is why we also exchange data with research and care facilities. We follow privacy laws when we do this. For more information about privacy, visit:  
[www.bevolkingsonderzoeknederland.nl/privacy](http://www.bevolkingsonderzoeknederland.nl/privacy)

*We have paid close attention to the content of this leaflet. You cannot derive any rights from it.*

## Multiple languages / andere talen



This information is available in English at  
Bu bilgiyi Türkçe olarak şu internet sitesinde okuyabilirsiniz

يمكنكم قراءة هذه المعلومات باللغة العربية على الموقع

Te informacje są również dostępne w języku polskim na stronie  
Ви можете прочитати цю інформацію українською на веб-сайті



[www.bevolkingsonderzoekbaarmoederhalskanker.nl/vertalingen](http://www.bevolkingsonderzoekbaarmoederhalskanker.nl/vertalingen)

We wrote this leaflet with help from the Centre for Population Screening, GPs (NHG), doctor's assistants (NVDA), gynaecologists (NVOG), medical microbiologists (NVMM), pathologists (NVVP), the Dutch Cancer Society and the Olijf Foundation.



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