

NATIONAL  
**CERVICAL SCREENING**  
PROGRAM

A joint Australian, State and Territory Government Program



THE PAP TEST HAS CHANGED  
**MORE ACCURATE. LESS OFTEN.**



Australian Government

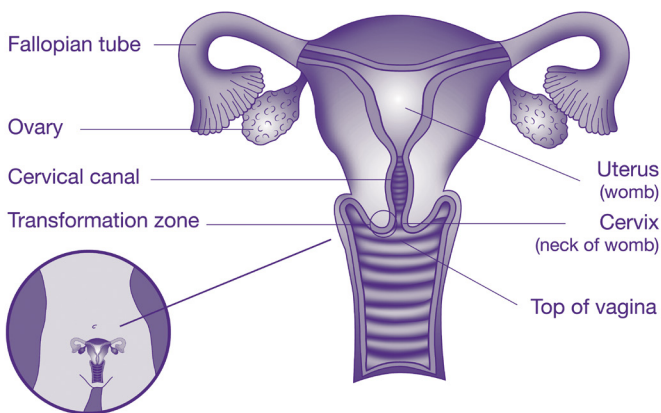
# Cervical Screening Test

Cervical screening has changed in Australia. The Pap test has been replaced with a new Cervical Screening Test every five years. The latest medical and scientific evidence shows that having a Cervical Screening Test every five years is just as safe, and is more effective than having a Pap test every two years.

The test is a quick and simple procedure to check the health of your cervix. For you, if you have ever had a Pap test before, the way the test is done will look and feel the same.

The procedure might be a bit uncomfortable, but it shouldn't hurt. If it hurts, tell your healthcare provider straight away. Remember, you can always ask for a female clinician.

Your cervix is the opening of the uterus (neck of the womb), and is at the top of your vagina (see the diagram below).



## How is the Cervical Screening Test more accurate?

Although it will feel the same for you, the way your sample is stored and tested is different. The latest medical and scientific evidence shows the new Cervical Screening Test is more effective at detecting the human papillomavirus (HPV) that causes cervical abnormalities, at an earlier stage.

Cervical cancer is rare and it usually takes 10 years for abnormalities caused by this virus to develop into cervical cancer.

It is expected that the changes to the National Cervical Screening Program will protect up to 30% more women from cervical cancer.

An increased understanding of cervical cancer and the changes made to the test means you can be confident. The new Cervical Screening Test is a more accurate, effective and safe test to have every five years instead of the two yearly Pap test.

Your healthcare provider will receive your results about two weeks after your test and may contact you to talk about your results.

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**A healthcare provider is a general practitioner (GP), nurse or doctor at a community or women's health centre, family planning and sexual health clinic or Aboriginal Medical Service – all can provide cervical screening. Remember, you can always ask for a female healthcare provider.**

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## Do I need a Cervical Screening Test?

If you are a woman aged 25-74 years of age and have ever been sexually active you should have a Cervical Screening Test every five years until the age of 74.

Your first Cervical Screening Test is due at 25 years of age or two years after your last Pap test. If your result is normal you will be due in five years to have your next test.

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**Every year around 800 Australian women are diagnosed with cervical cancer, however most cervical cancer is preventable with regular screening.**

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CERVICAL CANCER IS PREVENTABLE  
WITH REGULAR CERVICAL SCREENING.



TALK TO YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER  
TODAY ABOUT CERVICAL SCREENING.

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## Where can I get more information?

If you have any questions about the new Cervical Screening Test, book an appointment to talk with your healthcare provider.

Find out more about the Cervical Screening Test at [cancerscreening.gov.au/cervical](https://cancerscreening.gov.au/cervical) or call **13 15 56**.

The National Cervical Screening Program is a joint Australian, State and Territory Government Program.

If English is not your first language and you need help, for the cost of a local call, please phone the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on **13 14 50**.

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**At any age – If you have symptoms such as abnormal vaginal bleeding, pain or discharge, you should see your healthcare provider immediately.**