

Screen

EQUAL

Accessible cervical
screening information
for people with
intellectual disability



The Cervical Screening Test

Easy Read Booklet

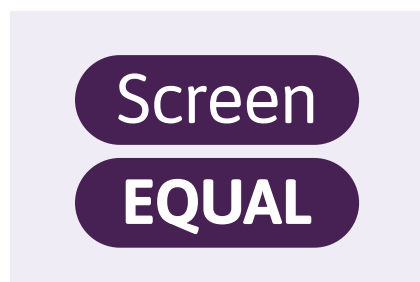
Screen

EQUAL

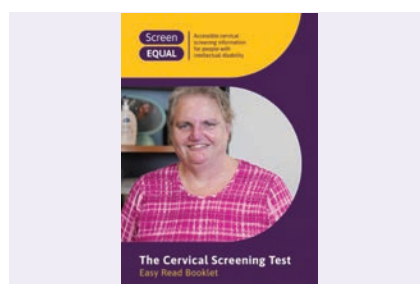
Contact us

screnequal.org.au

Contents



The ScreenEQUAL team wrote this booklet



This booklet is about the Cervical Screening Test:



1. What is it?	1
----------------	----------

2. Why is it an important test?	2
---------------------------------	----------

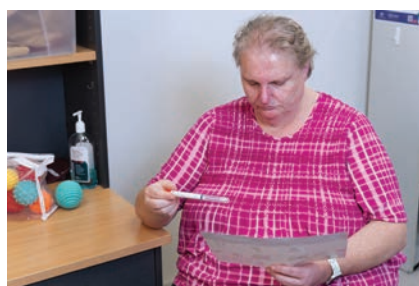
3. What are the different ways to do the test?	5
--	----------

4. How do you know if you need a test?	10
--	-----------

5. What are your rights and choices?	12
--------------------------------------	-----------

6. What happens during the test?	14
----------------------------------	-----------

7. What happens after the test?	18
---------------------------------	-----------



1. What is a Cervical Screening Test?



- It can protect you from having cervical cancer
- It works better than the old 'Pap Smear' test

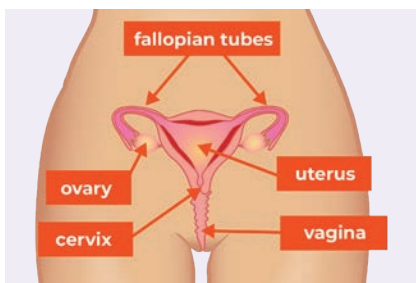


- It should be done every 5 years



The Cervical Screening Test is for people who

- Have a **cervix**
- Are between 25 and 74 years old



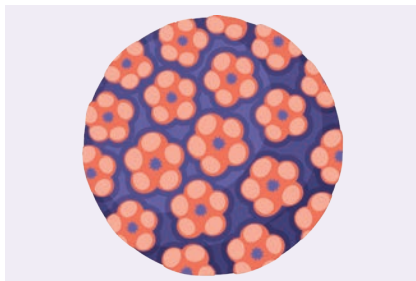
The **cervix** is inside your body

- It is at the top of your vagina
- You cannot see it from outside your body

2. Why is the Cervical Screening Test important?

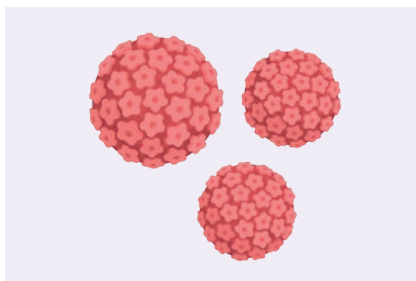


Cervical cancer is one of the easiest to stop



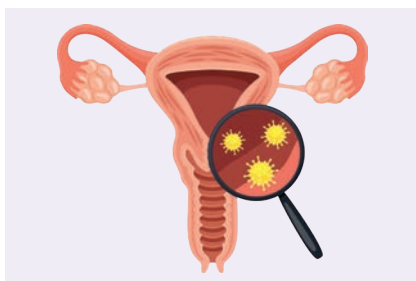
Cervical cancer is caused by the **Human Papillomavirus**

- It is called HPV for short



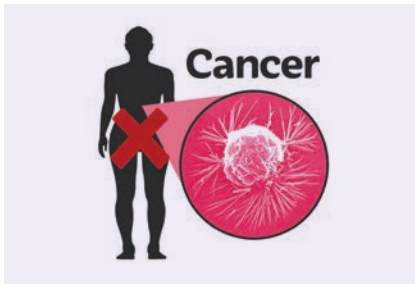
HPV is very common

- It mostly goes away on its own



Sometimes HPV causes changes in the cervix

- These changes could lead to cancer



Having HPV does not mean you have cancer



The Cervical Screening Test checks if

- Your cervix is healthy
- There are any changes that could become unhealthy



People can choose to get the Cervical Screening Test

- When they do not have any **symptoms**

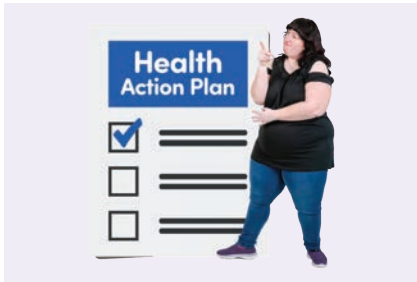


Symptoms are changes you notice in your body

This can be unusual bleeding from your vagina



Talk to a doctor or nurse if you have changes in your body which worry you



The Cervical Screening Test helps find

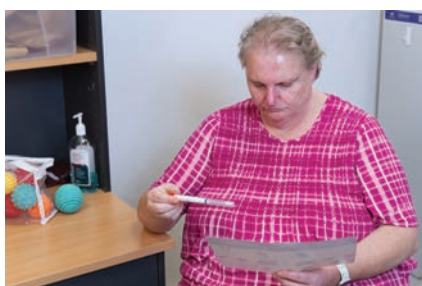
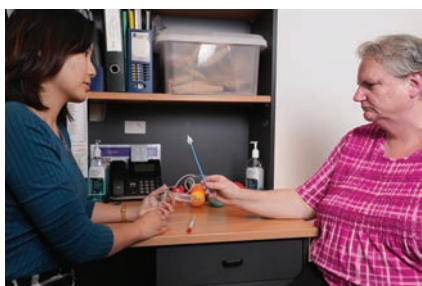
- Unhealthy changes in your body early

3. What are the different ways to do the test?



There are two ways to have the test

- You can take a self-swab from your vagina (option 1)
- A doctor or nurse can test from the cervix (option 2)



Option 1

You can take the test yourself

You put a swab into the lower part of your vagina



This is called self-collection or a self-swab

It works as well as the test from the cervix

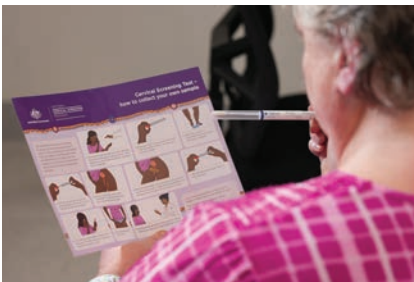


Some people choose to do a self-swab because

- It is more comfortable
- It is more private

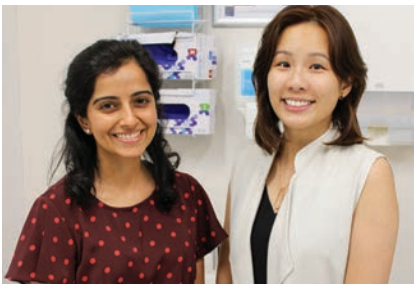


Some people worry they will not do the self-swab right



You can ask the doctor or nurse for

- Information and support to do your own self-swab test



A doctor or nurse could do the swab test for you

- If you want some help



With the self-swab there is a small chance

- You will need to go back for another test
- In a few weeks



Option 2

A doctor or nurse can take the test from the cervix



The doctor or nurse will use

- A tool called a speculum to see the cervix
- A soft brush to take a sample from the cervix



Some people choose this option because

- They trust doctors and nurses
- To do the test correctly



Some people are worried this option

- Is uncomfortable or hurts
- Is not private



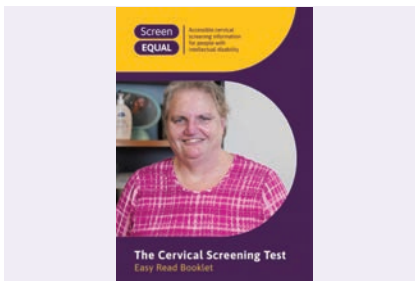
You can talk to your doctor or nurse

- About any worries you have
- Ask questions at any time



A doctor or nurse will give you information

- To help you choose what works for you



You can take this booklet to your appointment

It can help you talk to the doctor or nurse

4. How do you know if you need a cervical screening test?



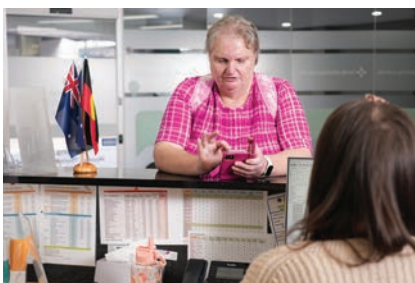
You will receive a letter in the mail



You will be asked by your doctor or nurse

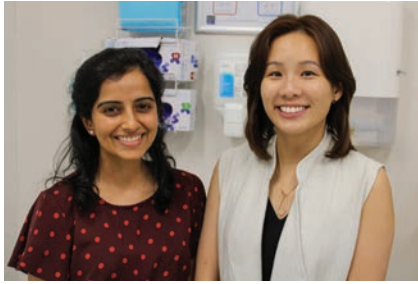


You can also ask a doctor or nurse for a test



You will need to book an appointment with a doctor or nurse

- To do a self-swab test
- Or a speculum and brush test from the cervix



You can see a doctor or nurse at places like

- Your usual GP Clinic



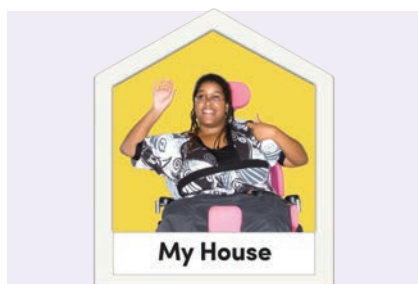
- A Family Planning Clinic



- A Women's Health Clinic



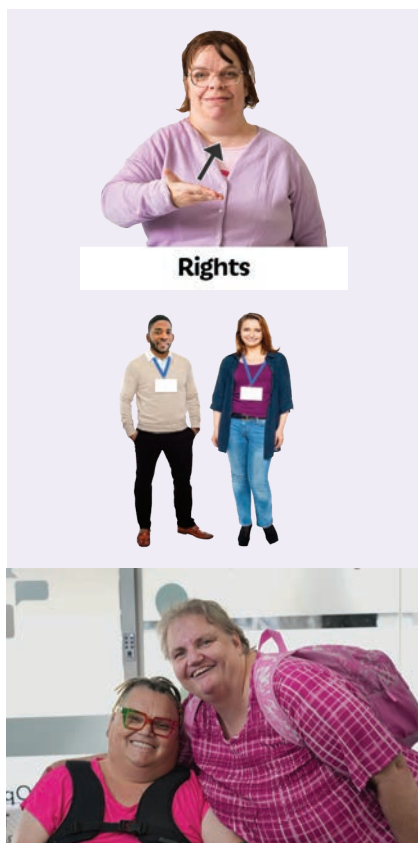
- An Aboriginal Health Service



Sometimes a doctor or nurse

- Can visit you at your house

5. What are your rights and choices at your appointment?



You can choose:

- If you want to have the test or not
- To see a female or male doctor or nurse
- To take a support person with you
- To go on your own
- Which way to do the test



If you need help in a different language you can ask for an interpreter

Do this when you book your appointment



You can stop the test at any time



You could do this by saying the word 'stop'

You can make your own plan with the doctor or nurse



At your appointment the doctor or nurse will

- Talk to you about your health
- Talk to you about your test choices

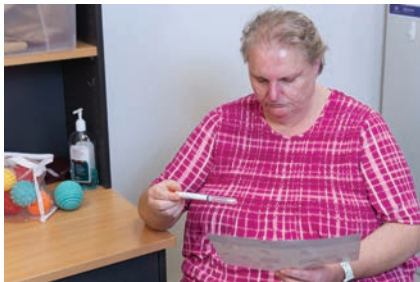


You can ask them questions at any time

6. What happens during the test?



If you choose a self-swab
(option 1)



- You will get information about the test
- You will get a swab to do the test



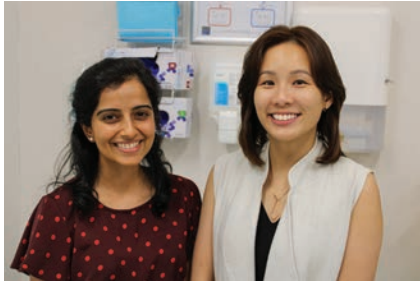
With the self-swab test you will

- Go to a private space
- Behind a curtain in the clinic room or in the bathroom



Do your self-swab test by

- Putting the swab inside your vagina
- Moving it in circles 2 to 3 times



You can also choose for a doctor or nurse

- To do the self-swab test for you



When you are finished you will give the test

- To the doctor or nurse



The doctor or nurse sends the test to a laboratory



If you want the doctor to do the cervix test (option 2)

- They will check that you agree
- For them to do the test



To do the test

- The doctor or nurse will ask you
- To remove your underpants



They will ask you

- To lie down on a bed
- With a sheet over your body



The doctor or nurse will

- Use the speculum and the soft brush
- To take the test from your cervix



The doctor or nurse sends the test to a laboratory



Some things you can do to relax are:

- Take slow deep breaths
- Play on your phone
- Listen to music
- Play with sensory toys



The test can be uncomfortable

- It usually does not hurt
- You can stop the test at any time

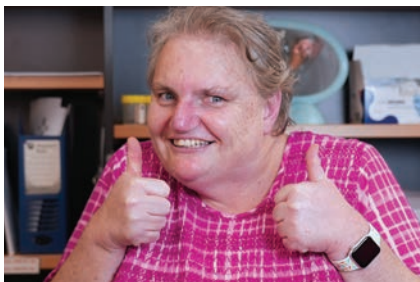


7. What happens after?



Your doctor or nurse will

- Call your phone
- Or have another appointment with you
- To tell you about your test result

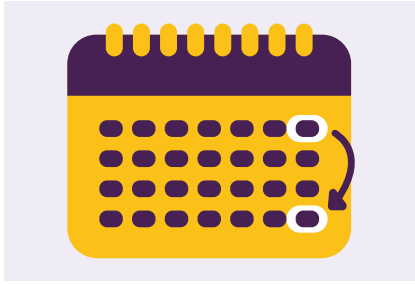


If your test does not show HPV your doctor or nurse will

- Tell you everything is ok
- Tell you when to have the next test



The next test is usually in 5 years time



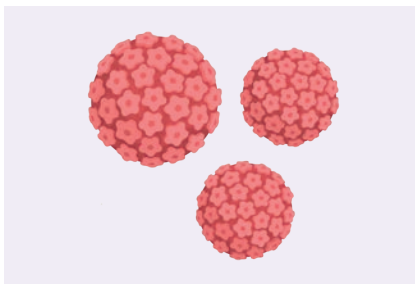
Sometimes you might be asked

- To come back for another test
- In a few weeks



If your test shows HPV you might be asked

- To see a specialist doctor
- Or to come back in 1 year

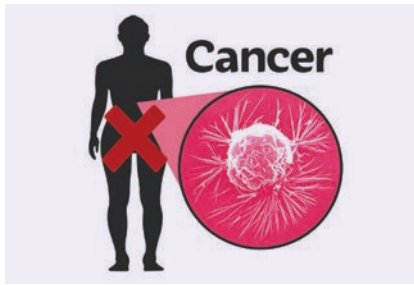


This is to see if the HPV has gone away

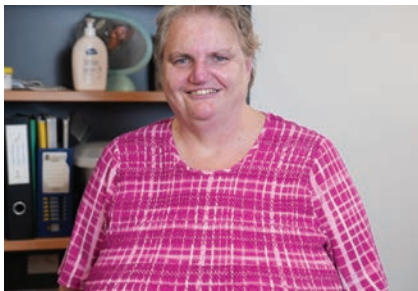


If there are changes the specialist doctor is worried about

- They will talk to you about what to do next



This does not mean you have cervical cancer



Having a cervical screening test helps

- Lower your chance of cervical cancer
- By finding and fixing changes early

Screen
EQUAL

Accessible cervical screening information
for people with intellectual disability



We would like to acknowledge that this resource was funded by a National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia (NHMRC) Targeted Cancer Research Grant APP2015215; 2022 – 2025. The contents of this published material are solely the responsibility of the individual authors and do not reflect the views of the NHMRC.