



## UK NSC HPV recommendation

The UK NSC recommends that the NHS Cervical Screening Programme should adopt the test for Human Papillomavirus (HPV) as a primary screening test.

High risk HPV is found in 99.7% of cervical cancers. Over three quarters of sexually active women will acquire the infection at some time in their lives. It is most common in women under 35 years. Most infections are transient and are cleared by the woman's immune system.

Currently, the cervical screening programme offered to women aged 25-64 test uses cytology. It only tests for HPV in women who have been found to have a low grade abnormality or have had treatment for an abnormality.

Evidence suggests screening for HPV will be a more effective way to let women know whether they have any risk of developing cervical cancer. It will reduce the number of women who would need to go on to have cytology screening to those who are HPV positive only.

### Key findings supporting the UK NSC recommendation

- the HPV vaccination offered to girls aged 12 to 13 strengthens the rationale for primary HPV screening. The vaccination will offer prevention of HPV and result in a falling number of women who remain at risk of catching HPV and developing cervical cancer
- a primary test for HPV will save more lives by determining a woman's risk earlier. Work to assess extending the screening interval with HPV screening is ongoing. This will follow once confirmatory pilot data and other international evidence is reviewed by the UK NSC
- HPV testing means that if the woman tested does not have high risk HPV, her chances of developing a cancer within five years are very small

The UK NSC regularly reviews its recommendations on screening for different conditions in the light of new research evidence becoming available.

To find out more about the UK NSC's HPV recommendation, please visit:

[legacy.screening.nhs.uk/cervicalcancer](http://legacy.screening.nhs.uk/cervicalcancer)

The UK National Screening Committee (UK NSC) advises ministers and the NHS in the 4 UK countries about all aspects of screening and supports implementation of screening programmes.

Find out more about the UK National Screening Committee at [www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-national-screening-committee-uk-nsc](http://www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-national-screening-committee-uk-nsc). The UK NSC evidence review process is described at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-nsc-evidence-review-process](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-nsc-evidence-review-process) and a list of all UK NSC recommendations can be found at [legacy.screening.nhs.uk/recommendations](http://legacy.screening.nhs.uk/recommendations)

The UK NSC secretariat is hosted by Public Health England ([www.gov.uk/phe](http://www.gov.uk/phe)).