



HUMAN PAPILLOMAVIRUS (HPV)

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What is it?

- HPV is a group of viruses that have different effects on your body.
- Some types of HPV do not cause you any harm, but other types can lead to things like abnormal cervical changes, cervical, vaginal, vulvar, penile and anal cancers, and genital warts.
- Cervical cancer affects about 1,350 Canadian women and causes 390 deaths every year.

Signs and Symptoms

- There are no symptoms associated with HPV.

How do you get it?

- HPV is a virus that can be passed from one person to another through direct skin contact, mostly through sexual contact.

Treatment

- Your body's immune system will often fight off HPV.
- Treatment is available for genital warts.
- Pap tests will detect early cervical abnormalities caused by HPV. Consult your doctor to discuss your choices.

Complications

- HPV infection usually goes away on its own.

- However depending on the type of HPV, you have a chance of developing cervical or genital cancers, cervical abnormalities, or genital warts.

Prevention

- Condoms do offer some protection but HPV may still be present on skin that is not covered.
- There is a HPV vaccine that can protect against this virus.
- Go for regular pap tests, even if you have the vaccine.