January

National Health Observances

Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Cervical Health Awareness Month

Sponsor: National Cervical Cancer Coalition (http://www.nccc-online.org)

Cervical Health Awareness Month is a chance to raise awareness about how women can protect themselves from HPV (human papillomavirus) and cervical cancer.

About 79 million Americans currently have HPV, the most common sexually transmitted disease. HPV is a major cause of cervical cancer.

The good news?

- HPV can be prevented with the HPV vaccine.
- Cervical cancer can often be prevented with regular screening tests (called Pap tests) and follow-up care.

A Pap test can help detect abnormal (changed) cells **before** they turn into cancer. Most deaths from cervical cancer can be prevented if women get regular Pap tests and follow-up care.

How can Cervical Health Awareness Month make a difference?
We can use this opportunity to spread the word about important steps women can take to stay healthy.

Here are just a few ideas:

- Encourage women to get their well-woman visit this year. (http://www.healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/everyday-healthy-living/sexual-health/get-your-well-woman-visit-every-year)
- Let women know that the health care reform law covers well-woman visits and cervical cancer screening. This means that, depending on their insurance, women can get these services at no cost to them.
- Talk to parents about how important it is for their pre-teens to get the HPV vaccine.

How can I help spread the word?
We've made it easier for you to make a difference. This toolkit is full of ideas to help you take action today. For example:

- Add information about HPV and cervical cancer prevention to your newsletter.
- Tweet about Cervical Health Awareness Month.
- Add our Web badge to your Web site.

Get the Word Out

Sample Media and/or Newsletter or Listserv Announcement

Cut and paste this text into your newsletter, listserv, or press release. Add local details and quotes from your organization.

January is Cervical Health Awareness Month. **[Your organization]** wants you to know that there's a lot you can do to prevent cervical cancer. About 79 million Americans currently have HPV (human papillomavirus), the most common sexually transmitted disease. HPV is a major cause of cervical cancer.

The good news?

- HPV can be prevented by the HPV vaccine.
- Cervical cancer can often be prevented with regular screening tests (called Pap tests) and follow-up care.

In honor of National Cervical Health Awareness Month, **[your organization]** encourages:

- Women to start getting regular Pap tests at age 21
- Women to get the HPV vaccine before age 27
- Parents to make sure their pre-teens get the HPV vaccine at age 11 or 12
- Men to get the HPV vaccine if you are under age 22

Thanks to the health care reform law, you and your family members may be able to get these services at no cost to you. Check with your insurance company.

Taking small steps can help keep you safe and healthy.

- **[Add details about your local activities.]**
- **[Include quote from your organization.]**

For more information, visit **[insert your organization's information]**.

Is your organization on Twitter? Send tweets.

- Lower your risk of getting HPV (human papillomavirus) – the most common sexually transmitted disease. Find out how: http://1.usa.gov/TIwCaE
  - Tweet this message: http://clicktotweet.com/dR3hZ
- HPV (human papillomavirus) is the most common sexually transmitted disease out there. Find out how HPV affects men: http://1.usa.gov/Y1tCN
  - Tweet this message: http://clicktotweet.com/88aZ8
- Ask your child's doctor about the HPV vaccine! Boys and girls both need the HPV vaccine at age 11 or 12. http://1.usa.gov/lWWco0
  - Tweet this message: http://clicktotweet.com/KQ0dF
- Find out what to expect during a pelvic exam: http://mayocl.in/S333my
  - Tweet this message: http://clicktotweet.com/5M6E4
- You can help prevent cervical cancer by getting regular screening tests (called Pap tests) and follow-up care. http://1.usa.gov/uclfGR
  - Tweet this message: http://clicktotweet.com/fefZk
- A Pap test can catch cervical cancer early, when it's easier to treat. Get more information about Pap tests: http://1.usa.gov/NiJG3B
  - Tweet this message: http://clicktotweet.com/cQUE6
- Find out how often you need to get tested for cervical cancer: http://1.usa.gov/uclfGR
  - Tweet this message: http://clicktotweet.com/589zT
- A Pap test can help prevent cervical cancer. Find out about free or low-cost ways to get a Pap test. http://1.usa.gov/lnhVtE
  - Tweet this message: http://clicktotweet.com/O6wG9
- Get help understanding your Pap test results: http://1.usa.gov/XxABiK
  - Tweet this message: http://clicktotweet.com/bbcSj
- Did you know that the HPV vaccine is covered under the health care reform law called the Affordable Care Act? http://1.usa.gov/wSZjFk
  - Tweet this message: http://clicktotweet.com/rOcm3
- Did you know that screening for cervical cancer is covered under the health care reform law called the Affordable Care Act? http://1.usa.gov/UxwVYp
  - Tweet this message: http://clicktotweet.com/zZ8ja

Send e-cards

- CDC – Cervical Cancer: The most preventable female cancer (http://t.cdc.gov/ecards/message.aspx?cardid=258)

Post a Web Badge

Add this free Web badge (http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho/nhoBadges.aspx#jan) to your Web site, blog, or social networking profile to show your support for Cervical Health Awareness Month

Get Involved

Take action to increase awareness about cervical health.

1. Partner with other local groups, like cancer networks and community health clinics.
2. Encourage healthcare providers to offer free or reduced-cost “Pap Days.”
3. Start a local National Cervical Cancer Coalition (NCCC) chapter in your community (http://www.nccc-online.org/index.php/startchapter).
4. This January, encourage local radio stations to air public service announcements (PSAs) to raise awareness about cervical health (http://www.nccc-online.org/images/pdfs/Radio_PSAs.pdf).
5. Recruit local bands to perform a benefit concert to raise money for cervical cancer prevention in your community.

Adapted from the National Cervical Cancer Coalition (NCCC).

Contact the National Cervical Cancer Coalition (http://www.nccc-online.org) at nccc@ashastd.org for more information.

Share These Tools

Health Topics

- Get Tested for Cervical Cancer (http://www.healthfinder.gov/prevention/ViewTopic.aspx?topicId=13)
- Get Your Well-Woman Visit Every Year (http://www.healthfinder.gov/prevention/ViewTopic.aspx?topicId=98)
- HPV Vaccine: Questions for your child's doctor (http://www.healthfinder.gov/prevention/ViewTool.aspx?toolId=53)
- STD Testing: Conversation starters (http://www.healthfinder.gov/prevention/ViewTool.aspx?toolId=17)

Personal Health Tools

- Pap Test Presentation (http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/tutorials/papsmear/htm/index.htm)
- Family Medical History Tracking (https://familyhistory.hhs.gov/fhh-web/home.action)
- Build Your Questions for the Doctor (http://www.ahrq.gov/questions/qb/)

More Information (Related Resources)

- HPV (Human Papillomavirus) (http://www.healthfinder.gov/scripts/SearchContext.asp?topic=427)
- Cervical Cancer (http://www.healthfinder.gov/scripts/SearchContext.asp?topic=149)
- Women's Health (http://www.healthfinder.gov/scripts/SearchContext.asp?topic=920)

Find More Resources

- The National Cervical Cancer Coalition (http://www.nccc-online.org) – Cervical Health Awareness Month Sponsor
- Human Papillomavirus (HPV) (http://www.cdc.gov/hpv/) – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Genital HPV Infection Face Sheet (http://www.cdc.gov/std/hpv/stdfact-hpv.htm) – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Cervical Cancer Prevention (http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/pdq/prevention/cervical/Patient/page3) – National Cancer Institute
- How can I be sure I don't get cervical cancer? (http://womenshealth.gov/publications/our-publications/fact-sheet/human-papillomavirus.cfm#s) – Office on Women's Health
- How do I protect myself from HPV? (http://womenshealth.gov/publications/our-publications/fact-sheet/human-papillomavirus.cfm#o) – Office on Women's Health
- HPV and Cervical Cancer Prevention (http://www.nccc-online.org/index.php/prevention) – National Cervical Cancer Coalition
- Pap Test Fact Sheet (http://womenshealth.gov/publications/our-publications/fact-sheet/pap-test.cfm) – Office on Women's Health

Tips to Plan a National Health Observance

Each National Health Observance (NHO) presents an opportunity to educate the public, energize co-workers and community members, and promote healthy behaviors. The NHO toolkits (http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho/) have the information and tools you need to get started.

Use the tips in this guide to plan a successful health promotion event.

Planning:

Planning is critical to the success of any outreach effort. Contact the NHO sponsoring organization several months ahead of time to request up-to-date information and materials. (Contact information for each month's sponsoring organization is provided in each toolkit).

- Consider enlisting the help of a community partner to help you plan and promote your event.
- Meet with those who will be valuable in your event coordination. To get started, sit down with potential partners, such as local businesses, local government agencies, key leaders, organizations, and media partners who share an interest in the NHO.
- Recruit volunteers, speakers, and community liaisons.
- Develop new or adapt existing materials to distribute at the event.
- Be sure to get them printed and/or copied in advance.
- Conduct a run-through before the event.

Promoting:

Develop a publicity and media outreach plan. Designate a media contact from your planning team and make sure he or she is available to answer questions and follow up on media requests.

- Start by creating a local media list.
- Use local-access television, radio, newspaper, and community calendars to promote your event.
- Post event announcements on your Web site. Encourage your partners to post similar announcements on their Web sites.
- Send a press release.
- Engage the media by offering a spokesperson from your organization or the community.

- Post flyers or posters throughout the community: on bulletin boards at local community centers, places of worship, libraries, post offices, local schools, recreation centers, clinics, pharmacies, stores, and businesses.
- Send flyers to each participating organization for distribution.

On the Day of the Event:

- Set up tables, chairs, and a check-in table prior to your event.
- Make plenty of sign-in sheets. Create a separate sign-in sheet for members of the media.
- Don't forget the refreshments!
- Make signs to direct participants and reporters to your event.

Tracking Media Coverage:

If you are distributing information to the media, plan ahead of time to track your coverage. There are both paid and free resources to track media coverage.

Free media tracking resources search for news articles based on your specific search term(s) and a date range. Some tracking services will send automatic email alerts to notify you when your event and/or keywords are mentioned.

Paid media tracking typically captures a wider range of media stories (both print and online) than free Internet search tools. Paid media tracking sources search within certain locations, news outlet types, and/or specific dates. Some paid media tracking tools offer email alerts and the ability to search archived Web and print news; they also allow users to tailor searches to obtain the most relevant media stories. Other paid media services monitor all forms of social media, including blogs, top video and image-sharing sites, forums, opinion sites, mainstream online media, and Twitter.

Be sure to share media coverage with your community partners, stakeholders, and all those who helped you plan and promote your event. Post a summary of media coverage on your organization's Web site. No matter the size or success of your event, remember that your efforts are key to educating the public about important health issues.

Last but not least, share your feedback and results with us here at healthfinder.gov. You can contact us at info@nhic.org or send us a tweet @healthfinder (http://twitter.com/healthfinder).