

Cervical Cancer –

Let's get the conversation started



Did you know that cervical cancer is referred to as the “silent killer” because cervical cancer presents no symptoms in the early stages? Or did you know that 99.8% of cervical cancer cases are preventable?

Almost all cervical cancer cases are linked to infection with a high-risk Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), an extremely common virus transmitted through sexual contact.

When diagnosed, cervical cancer is one of the most successfully treatable forms of cancer, as long as it is detected early and managed effectively.

Effective primary (HPV vaccination) and secondary prevention (screening, treating precancerous lesions) will prevent most cases of cancer.

Possible symptoms

The symptoms of cervical cancer are not always obvious and it might not cause any at all until it has reached an advanced stage. In most cases, the first noticeable symptom is abnormal vaginal bleeding. Other symptoms might include:

- Unusual vaginal discharge
- Heavier and longer periods
- New bleeding after having been through the [Menopause](#)
- Discomfort while urinating
- Loss of bladder control
- Pain during intercourse
- Constant fatigue
- Pelvic pain
- Unexplained weight loss
- Leg pain

Many of these symptoms are non-specific, meaning that the vast majority of cervical cancers will only be diagnosed through routine cervical screening.

Why is it important to talk about cervical cancer?

- Women of all ages are at risk of cervical cancer
- In the UK, there are around 3,100 new cases every year or over 8 cases diagnosed every day
- Incidence rates are highest in females aged 30-34
- Cervical cancer is more common in white females than women of other races
- Transgender men, non-binary and intersex people with a cervix are also at risk of cervical cancer and if aged between 25-64, they are entitled to have regular cervical screenings.

Cervical cancer cannot be prevented completely, but regular cervical screening is the best way to identify abnormal cells in the cervix.

Available support

NAWP and the PDA want to play their part in raising awareness of cervical cancer in the workplace.

Cervical cancer screening provides the best protection against cervical cancer and we are encouraging employers to commit to finding solutions to allow employees to attend life-saving cervical screening if they are unable to get appointments outside of working hours.

Employers need to acknowledge that employees diagnosed with cervical cancer might require time off for treatment and medical appointments as well as allowing flexibility with working hours, the tasks that need to be performed and the working environment.

If employees cannot work because of their illness, they might be entitled to statutory or company sick pay and should speak to their employers.

References: NHS, Cancer Research UK, Jo's Cervical cancer Trust, The Eve Appeal, Sunrise Hospitals, Fit For Work, National Foundation for Cancer Research, WHO