



Australian Government

NATIONAL  
**CERVICAL SCREENING**  
PROGRAM

A joint Australian, State and Territory Government Program

# Understanding your Cervical Screening Test results

**This guide helps you understand your Cervical Screening Test results.**



Your doctor or nurse will discuss your results and the next steps with you.

This is a good time to ask any questions or let them know if you are feeling worried about your results.

## **What does the Cervical Screening Test look for?**

The Cervical Screening Test looks for the human papillomavirus (HPV) infection.

HPV is so common that many people have it at some point in their lives and never know it, as there are usually no symptoms.

But if HPV stays in our bodies for a long time, it can cause problems that may lead to cervical cancer. This usually takes 10 to 15 years.

## **What does my test result mean?**

Your doctor or nurse will talk to you about your Cervical Screening Test results, and will answer any questions you have.



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## Understanding your test results

These are the possible results and what they mean.

Return to screen in 5 years	No HPV was found in your sample. Your next test is in 5 years. You'll be reminded 3 months before your next test is due.
Return for another sample collected by your healthcare provider.	You chose self-collection for your test and HPV was found in your self-collected sample. You'll be asked to go back to your doctor or nurse. They will collect another sample that includes cervical cells. It's not possible to use self-collection for this sample.
Repeat the test in 12 months	HPV was found in your sample, but your body will probably clear it on its own. It's safe for you to wait 12 months before you test again.
Repeat the Cervical Screening Test due to unsatisfactory test result	The laboratory couldn't get a result from your sample. This doesn't mean there's something wrong. Book in to do your test again in 6 to 12 weeks.
Refer to a specialist	HPV was found in your sample and the type of HPV infection needs extra tests or treatment. Your doctor or nurse will refer you to a specialist for another test.

### More information?

If you need more information, talk to your doctor, nurse or health worker, visit [www.health.gov.au/NCSP](http://www.health.gov.au/NCSP) or call **1800 627 701**.

For help in your language you can call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on **131 450**.

Visit [www.health.gov.au/NCSP-multicultural](http://www.health.gov.au/NCSP-multicultural) for translated information.