National Cervical Screening Program

Pathology Test Guide for Cervical and Vaginal Testing^

| Patient presents as | Context\* | Age | Sample | Test type | Write on the pathology request form: |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Asymptomatic | NCSP routine 5-yearly screening   * Only 1 of this MBS item is claimable in a 57-month period | ≥ 24yrs & 9mths | Vaginal  Cervical | HPV test | Cervical Screening Test (CST) HPV test (self-collected) |
| Screening under- and never-screened patients   * Following a self-collect test result of HPV detected, not 16/18 (intermediate risk) |  | Cervical | Standalone LBC | Liquid Based cytology (LBC) |
| Asymptomatic | Screening in specific populations   * Immune-deficient * Early sexual debut, prior to 14 years and not vaccinated prior to sexual debut (only one claimable between 20 to 24 years of age) | Any age | Cervical | HPV test | * HPV test, Immune-deficient * HPV test, Early debut HPV |
| Follow-up test claimable after previous positive screening test (12-month repeat) | Follow-up HPV test |
| Follow-up or post-treatment for clinical management   * ​Following treatment of HSIL (also called “Test of Cure”) * Following treatment of AIS * DES exposed in utero | Co-test (HPV & LBC) | * “Co-test” or “HPV”, Test of Cure * “Co-test” or “HPV & LBC” Post-treatment * “Co-test” or “HPV & LBC”, DES |
| Symptomatic 1 | For investigation of symptoms   * Abnormal vaginal bleeding (post-coital, unexplained inter-menstrual or any post-menopausal) * Unexplained persistent unusual discharge (especially if offensive and/or blood stained) | Any age | Cervical | Co-test (HPV & LBC) | * “Co-test” or “HPV”, Test of Cure * “Co-test” or “HPV & LBC” Post-treatment * “Co-test” or “HPV & LBC”, DES |
| If due for cervical screening   * Vaginal discharge (other than persistent or unusual) * Deep dyspareunia (in the absence of bleeding or discharge) | HPV test | CST HPV test |
| HPV test after total hysterectomy | No evidence of cervical pathology on hysterectomy specimen and patient screening history not available | Any age | Vaginal vault | HPV test | Vaginal vault HPV test |
| Unexpected LSIL or HSIL identified in hysterectomy specimen;   * Hysterectomy for treatment of HSIL in the presence of benign gynaecological disease; or * Following histologically-confirmed HSIL without previous Test of Cure and no cervical pathology in hysterectomy specimen. |
| Follow-up self-collect HPV test (clinical management) | Only claimable within 21 months following the detection of oncogenic HPV (any type) on a self-collected screening test | ≥ 30yrs | Vaginal | HPV test | Self-collect HPV follow-up test |
| Cervical | Standalone LBC | LBC |
| Repeat test following an unsatisfactory test | Following an unsatisfactory test:   * Only claimable when preceded by another cervical or vaginal MBS Item | Any age | Cervical | HPV test | HPV test, previous result unsatisfactory |
| Vaginal |
| Cervical | LBC | LBC, previous result unsatisfactory |

^ For more information see the booklet, [*Understanding the National Cervical Screening Program Management Pathway – a Guide for Healthcare Providers*](https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/national-cervical-screening-program-understanding-the-national-cervical-screening-program-management-pathway?language=en)

\* Further appropriate use scenarios are outlined in the 2025 Guidelines, accessible from [*www.cancer.org.au/clinical-guidelines/cervical-cancer/cervical-cancer-screening*](http://www.cancer.org.au/clinical-guidelines/cervical-cancer/cervical-cancer-screening)

Persistence of any unexplained gynaecological symptoms should always warrant further investigation and referral as appropriate.

