

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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only 1 of this MBS item is claimable in a 57-month period 	≥ 24yrs & 9mths	Vaginal	HPV test	Cervical Screening Test (CST) HPV test (self-collected)
	Screening under- and never-screened patients <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following treatment of HSIL (also called “Test of Cure”) Following treatment of AIS DES exposed in utero 			Co-test (HPV & LBC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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*

* Further appropriate use scenarios are outlined in the 2025 Guidelines, accessible from www.cancer.org.au/clinical-guidelines/cervical-cancer/cervical-cancer-screening

¹ Persistence of any unexplained gynaecological symptoms should always warrant further investigation and referral as appropriate.