

What you need to know about your Cervical Screening Test

A simple test that could help prevent cervical cancer

If you're a woman or person with a cervix aged 25 to 74 who has ever had any type of sexual contact, you should have a Cervical Screening Test **every 5 years**.

The test looks for human papillomavirus (HPV), a very common virus that causes almost all cervical cancers. If HPV stays in the body for a long time, it can change cells in the cervix. These changes can become cancerous.

Finding HPV early means changes can be monitored or treated before cancer develops.



There are two ways to do the test

You can choose the option that feels right for you.
Both options are organised through your healthcare provider and are effective ways to screen for HPV.



Self-collect

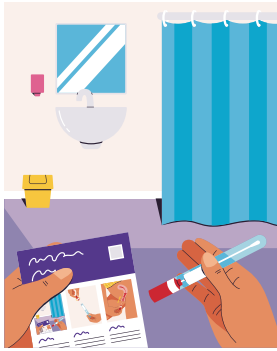
You collect your own sample from your vagina using a thin, soft swab.



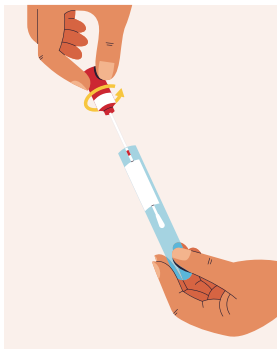
Healthcare provider-collect

A doctor, nurse or health worker collects a sample from your cervix using a speculum and a soft brush.

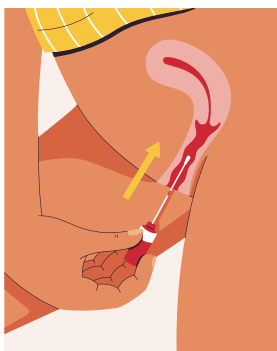
How to collect your own sample



- 1 Your healthcare provider will give you a swab and somewhere private to do your test.

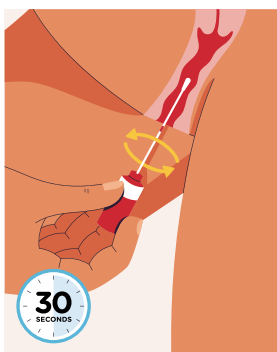


- 2 Twist the cap and remove the swab from the tube. Hold on to the cap and do not touch the end of the swab.

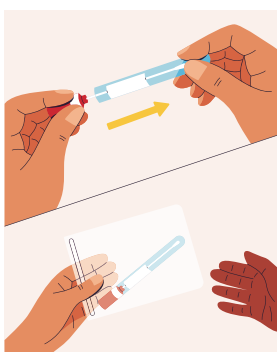


- 3 Insert the swab into your vagina. **You do not need to reach your cervix.**

The swab should have a red mark to show you how far to put it in.



- 4 Gently move the swab in a circle inside your vagina. Do this for 20-30 seconds to collect a sample.



- 5 Gently remove the swab from your vagina. Place the swab back into the tube, screw the cap back on and give it back to your healthcare provider.

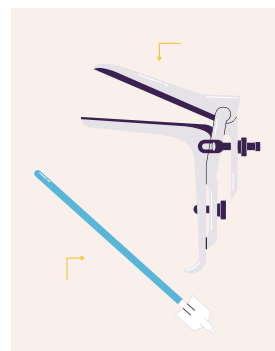
How a healthcare provider collects your sample



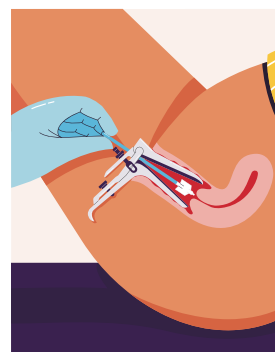
- You'll be in a private space with your healthcare provider — usually a doctor, nurse, or health worker.



- You will be asked to remove your clothes below the waist and lie on your back. You will be given a sheet to cover yourself.



- The healthcare provider will use a device called a speculum to make it easier to access your cervix, and a soft brush to collect the sample.



- They will take a small sample of cells from your cervix. It may feel uncomfortable but should not hurt.

If it hurts, tell your healthcare provider straight away.

What happens next?

Your healthcare provider will send your sample to a pathology laboratory to be tested. They'll receive your results and let you know if any follow-up is needed.

You can learn more about the Cervical Screening Test at health.gov.au/ncsp, or talk to your healthcare provider.

