

January 13, 2012

January is Cervical Health Awareness Month

HPV + Pap Co-Testing is Most Effective for Cervical Cancer Detection

BACKGROUND

Cervical cancer usually results from a persistent HPV (human papillomavirus) infection.

Combined HPV + Pap co-testing identifies high-risk HPV before cervical cancer develops and is 16% more accurate than liquid-based Paps alone. According to the American Cancer Society, 60 – 80% of women diagnosed with cervical cancer have not had a Pap test in the past five years.

OREGON POSTS DISMAL GRADE IN WOMEN'S HEALTH REPORT CARD

Oregon's overall Health Care grade was "U" (unsatisfactory) in the December 2010 Health Care Report Card and, specifically, "F" (failing) for women who completed Pap tests (down from 83.5% in 2007 to 74.9% in 2010) in the state by state ranking released December 2010 by the National Women's Law Center and Oregon Health & Science University.¹

Pap tests remain the primary screening tool to identify and prevent cervical cancer. Nevertheless, many women do not receive regular Pap tests;² particularly older women, uninsured women and women in key minority groups.³ When cervical cancer is identified early it is highly treatable and associated with long survival and good quality of life, but 6 out of 10 cervical cancer cases occur in women who have never been screened or who have not received a Pap test in the past five years. Regular Pap tests are essential to women's health

and when widely adopted, assist to reduce mortality and morbidity rates associated with cervical cancer.⁴

Additionally, HPV testing should be used for routine screening in women 30 years of age and older since a positive HPV test is more likely to represent persistent infection and increased risk of cervical cancer as per the national recommended guidelines by the American Cancer Society, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the American Society for Colposcopy and Cervical Pathology.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE

PeaceHealth Laboratories offers a full range of women's health testing options to help you provide the best care possible for your patients. As part of National Cervical Health Awareness Month, we hope you'll include an HPV test as part of the routine screening process for your female patients 30 years of age and older. HPV 16/18 genotyping is also available as a standalone or as an add-on to a positive HPV test.

EASYACCESS SAVINGS PROGRAM FOR UNINSURED PATIENTS

According to the National Women's Law Center and Oregon Health & Science University study, 18.9% of women in the state of Oregon do not

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have health insurance, resulting in an “F” for this category. To meet this need, PeaceHealth Laboratories has expanded our EasyAccess Savings Program for uninsured patients to include access to routine preventive women’s health testing with savings of 20-40% for Paps, HPV and Genotype Testing, HIV, Gonorrhea, Chlamydia and Syphilis. Specimens may be collected at physician offices or at any of our participating Patient Service Centers (blood and urine only).

QUESTIONS?

Women’s Health Testing

Mark Endicott, MS, CT(ASCP)
Cytology Supervisor/Tech Specialist
800-826-3616 ext. 1569
541-687-2134 ext. 1569
mendicott@peacehealthlabs.org

EasyAccess Savings Program

Client Services 800-826-3616
Ask for our patient information display
www.peacehealthlabs.org/EasyAccess

John DiTomasso, MD

Cytopathologist
541-984-8284
ditomasso@peacehealthlabs.org

REFERENCES

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2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), “Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Data,” (Atlanta, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2008), available at <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/brfss/list.asp?cat=WH&yr=2008&qkey=4426&state=All>.
3. Kaiser Family Foundation, Putting Women’s Health Care Disparities on the Map: Examining Racial and Ethnic Disparities at the State Level, June 2009, available at <http://www.kff.org/minorityhealth/upload/7886.pdf>
4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), “Cervical Cancer. Inside Knowledge Fact Sheet,” (undated), available at: http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/cervical/pdf/cervical_facts.pdf