

# HPV is the *primary cause of* cervical cancer.

**Q: What is Human Papillomavirus (HPV)?**

**A:** HPV is one of the more common sexually transmitted infections in both men and women. It is the primary cause of both cervical disease leading to cancer as well as actual cervical cancer. There are more than 100 types of HPV, some low-risk and others high-risk. About 30 types of HPV can infect the genital area — the vulva, vagina, cervix, rectum, anus, penis, or scrotum. Some types may cause genital warts; some may cause cellular changes; however, most types seem to have no harmful effect.

**Q: Why is HPV testing so important?**

**A:** HPV is present in more than 99% of cervical cancers. The Pap test can detect abnormal changes in the cervix due to the presence of HPV. Having this virus puts a woman at increased risk for cervical cancer, but does not necessarily mean she will get cancer. Low-risk types are rarely associated with cervical cancer and are more likely to be linked to genital warts or other noncancer-related infections. It is important to test for HPV so that your doctor can assess your risk of developing cervical cancer.

**Q: What are the symptoms of an HPV infection?**

**A:** An HPV infection may appear as grossly visible warts in the vagina or the vulva (the outer part of the female genitals), or it may manifest itself microscopically as abnormal cell changes on a Pap test. The symptoms of an HPV infection may not be visible to the naked eye or may appear weeks, months or years after initial infection. It is possible to become infected without being aware of it.

**APMG is the longest standing independent pathology practice in Silicon Valley.**

Our group consists of eight pathologists at two practice sites: Los Gatos and Santa Cruz, serving physicians throughout California.

Our pathologists are outpatient and inpatient specialists that produce accurate, diagnostic reports within 24 hours in most instances. Abnormal cases are routinely peer-reviewed.

Our state-of-the-art, CAP-certified histopathology laboratory produces over 100,000 high-quality slides for microscopic examination each year. We offer an extensive menu of special immunohistochemical and special stains.

- **Friendly courier service** picks up specimens, and returns results, at your convenience.
- **Photomicrographs** on diagnosed tissue available.
- Extensive managed care, and preferred provider, **contracts with national and local insurance carriers.** Special accommodations available for uninsured patients.
- **Information technology** capabilities allow us to provide pathology reports via auto-fax, remote printing, and direct interface to practice management systems.



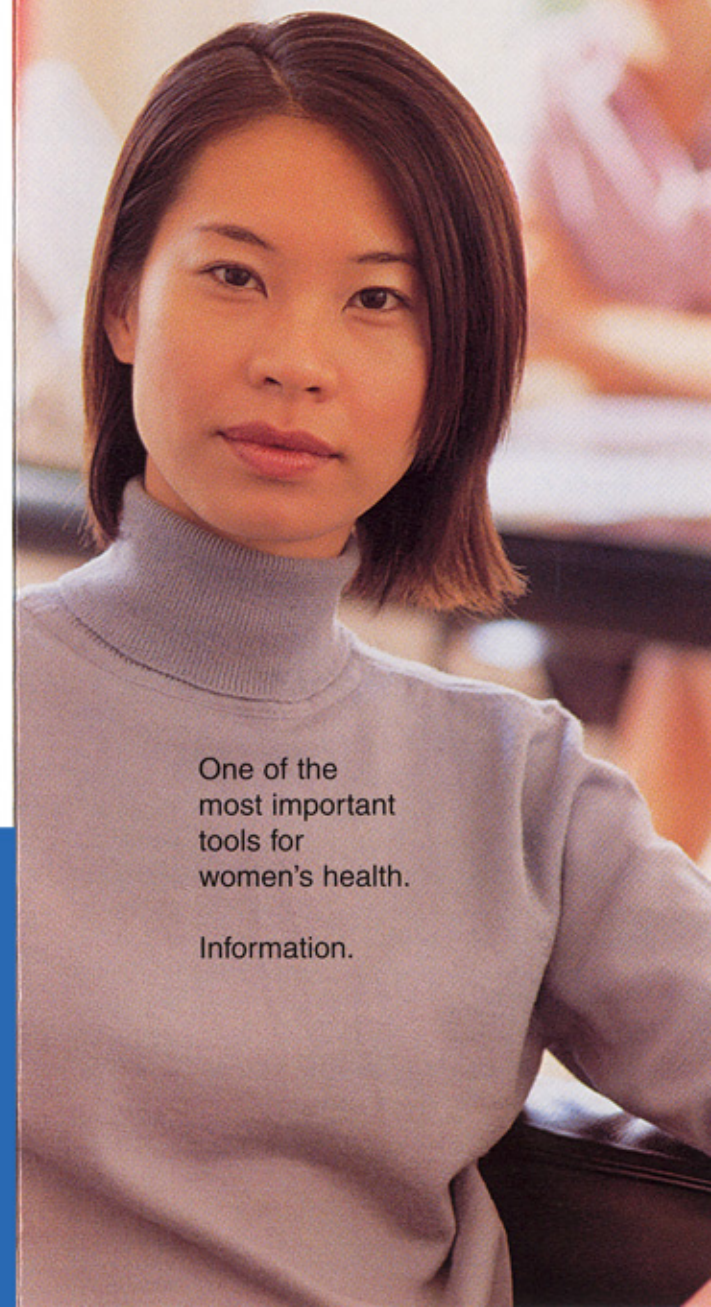
*Associated Pathology  
Medical Group, Inc.*

105A Cooper Court  
Los Gatos, CA 95030  
**800.848.2764**

FAX (408) 395-0471  
[www.apmglab.com](http://www.apmglab.com)

# HPV

**Human Papillomavirus**



One of the  
most important  
tools for  
women's health.

Information.

Knowledge is power.



**Q: Are you at risk?**

**A:** An estimated **5.5 million people** become infected with HPV each year, and an estimated 20 million Americans are currently infected. Anyone who is, or has been, sexually active can get an HPV infection, because the virus spreads through sexual intercourse. While both men and women can contract HPV infections, you are at greater risk of becoming infected if:

- You have had multiple sex partners at any time, or you are the partner of someone who has had multiple sex partners.
- You became sexually active at an early age.
- You or any of your sexual partners have a history of other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), genital warts, abnormal Pap tests, or cervical or penile cancer.

**Q: How does HPV effect men?**

**A:** Most of the time, males will not have any symptoms or health risks, such as cancer, with the "high-risk" types of HPV. We recommend that sexual partners be examined by a physician. If warts are found on examination, the partner can be treated. If warts are not found, the male may still carry HPV but show no signs of it. HPV prevention strategies include maintaining integrity of the skin, maintaining a healthy lifestyle (proper nutrition and exercise to keep the immune system strong), cessation of smoking and the consistent use of condoms during sexual intercourse.

**Q: How are HPV infections detected?**

**A:** Unless you have genital warts or have had abnormal Pap test results, you won't be able to tell you have HPV. Fortunately, a new HPV diagnostic test is available that can be collected at the same time as your Pap test. The Digene Hybrid Capture II DNA Assay is an FDA-approved test that detects the presence of HPV and categorizes it as either a low- or high-risk type.

**Q: How will your doctor use the HPV test?**

**A:** If your Pap test results are abnormal, your doctor may want to order the HPV test to determine if the abnormal cell changes are due to the presence of HPV. Your HPV test results will be reviewed in conjunction with your Pap test result to assess your risk of developing cervical cancer and to determine the appropriate treatment or follow-up plan.

- Negative HPV test results mean that the virus was not detected in the sample of cells taken from your cervix.
- If the test is positive for a low-risk type of the virus, your physician may want to monitor the infection; however, there is little chance of your developing cervical cancer.
- Positive, high-risk results indicate that you may be at increased risk of developing cervical cancer.

**Q: How can HPV infections be treated?**

**A:** Although most HPV infections do not progress to cancer, it is particularly important for women who have cervical abnormalities to have regular Pap tests. If you test positive for high-risk HPV infection, your

doctor will probably order additional tests to determine the best treatment or follow-up plan for you. Genital warts caused by low-risk HPV are treatable by using several effective wart therapies. Your doctor may recommend a simple and relatively painless procedure for treatment. These therapies are often performed in the doctor's office.



*Associated Pathology  
Medical Group, Inc.*