



# I'm HPV Positive ...

## What does that mean for me?

Learning that you are HPV positive can lead to a variety of feelings and raise a number of questions.

First and foremost, it's important to realize that being HPV positive is nothing to be ashamed of and it does not mean you have or will develop cervical cancer.

## Resources



For more information on HPV, visit [www.hpvinfos.ca](http://www.hpvinfos.ca).



For more information on HPV vaccination, click [here](#).

Call HealthLine 811 or contact your local **Public Health Office** to find out if you are eligible for the HPV vaccine at no cost.



For more on cervical screening and colposcopy, visit the Screening Program for Cervical Cancer website at [saskcancer.ca/spcc](http://saskcancer.ca/spcc)

or call our Early Detection Coordinator tool free at 1-800-667-0017.



Screening Program for Cervical Cancer



# How did I get HPV?

**Human Papillomavirus or HPV is the most common sexually transmitted infection in the world.**



It can infect anyone who has ever had any kind of sexual encounter. It is transmitted by "skin to skin" contact. Most people are infected with HPV at some point in their lives, but it usually disappears on its own within about two years without a person ever knowing they had it.



There are over 100 types of HPV. Most of them are harmless and cause no signs or symptoms. Approximately 40 types of HPV can infect the genital region. Of these 40, approximately 13 to 15 are "high-risk", meaning that they may potentially cause pre-cancerous lesions, cervical, oral, anal, or other genital cancers.



Having a high-risk HPV infection does not mean a person has or will develop cancer. In some cases, a high-risk HPV infection may lead to pre-cancerous cells of the cervix, which could progress into cancer if left undetected and untreated for years.

# What happens next?

## 1 See your health-care provider.

It is important to follow up with your health-care provider, who will refer you to a specialist for a colposcopy.

## 2 Go for colposcopy.

A colposcopy is where a specialist examines your cervix more closely.

## 3 Follow up with your provider.

Discuss your colposcopy results with your health-care provider.

They will explain the next steps for your care, if you need other treatment, and when you should go for cervical screening again.

# Can I do anything to prevent an HPV infection and cervical cancer?

## Condoms

Condom use can help, but not completely eliminate risk.

## Smoking

Stopping smoking may help clear lesions and decrease risks of developing cervical or other cancers.

## Partners

Limiting the number of sexual partners may decrease your risk.

## Vaccinations

Gardasil®9 is a safe and effective vaccine that protects against infection from nine HPV types, including seven high-risk types which cause 90% of cervical cancers.

## Screening

Regular cervical screening is one of the best ways to prevent cervical cancer so that any cell changes caused by HPV can be found and treated early.