

## What happens if no HPV is found?

If your result is normal and no HPV or abnormal cells are found, you will be invited for another combination HPV and smear test at the colposcopy service in one year. If the result of the second test a year later is again normal, with no HPV and no abnormal cells, you can return to routine screening by smear test every three or five years, depending on your age.

## Where can I find more information about HPV?

You can talk to your doctor or colposcopy nurse.  
The CervicalCheck website ([www.cervicalcheck.ie](http://www.cervicalcheck.ie))

# About your combined smear test and HPV test

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Plain  
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Cervical screening saves lives

## Why are you being offered a combination smear and HPV test?

This new test is being offered to women who have had a treatment at colposcopy following a CervicalCheck smear test and an abnormal smear test result. It can help reduce the need for annual smear tests for 10 years after a treatment at colposcopy.

## What is HPV?

HPV is the human papillomavirus. HPV is a very common infection of the cervix (the neck of the womb). Most women get HPV at some time in their lives. In most cases it does not need treatment and the body will clear a HPV infection on its own.

## How do women get HPV?

In most cases, HPV is passed on by direct skin to skin contact during vaginal, anal, or oral sex with someone who has been infected with HPV. Most women who are sexually active will have HPV at some time. In most cases, the virus does not cause any problems and disappears naturally over time. The virus has no symptoms so women can have it for many years without knowing about it.

## How is HPV treated?

There is no cure for HPV. In most cases, the body will clear a HPV infection on its own. When the HPV clears, the cervical cells go back to normal. However, even though there is no cure for the virus, its effects, such as abnormal cells on the cervix (neck of the womb), can be treated. If the HPV leads to abnormal cells on your cervix, they will be treated or removed at the colposcopy clinic. This treatment is usually very successful.

## How is the combination smear test and HPV test done?

Six months after your treatment at colposcopy you will have a smear test. The sample taken at this smear test is tested for HPV. The sample is examined in a laboratory and you will be sent your result in the post.

## What happens if HPV is found?

If HPV is found or if the test shows abnormal cells, you will be invited for a colposcopy again to check for any persisting abnormality. If you need more treatment at colposcopy, you will start the post treatment process again with two combination HPV and smear tests – one at six months after your treatment and another a year after that.

If you do not need more treatment, you will still need to have a smear test every year for 10 years to monitor the situation, as you could still develop changes in your cervix. It is important that you go for your smear test when invited so that any abnormality can be detected.