

Cervical Screening in relation to Pregnancy/Breastfeeding/Miscarriage

- Women with a negative screening history or women who have never been screened may defer their smear test until they are three months post-natal.
 - If a previous test was abnormal and in the interim the woman becomes pregnant, then the repeat test should not be delayed but should be taken in mid-trimester, unless there is an obstetric contraindication.
 - If the woman has received a 'refer to colposcopy' recommendation, she should always be referred to colposcopy and she should be encouraged to attend her appointment.
 - If a woman has had a miscarriage, it is advisable to delay the smear test until three months after the miscarriage.
 - If the woman is breast feeding and is due a smear test, wait until she is 3 months post natal. Document on the cytology form that she is breast feeding.
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Points to remember

- A woman does not require a smear test when she is postnatal unless she is due to have a smear test within her call, re-call recommendations.
 - Pregnancy has no adverse effect in the progression of abnormal cells or the development of cervical cancer. Occasionally, women may experience slight bleeding after having a smear test in pregnancy but a smear test will not increase the risk of miscarriage.
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Guidelines and Reference Material

- European Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Cervical Screening – Section 1.2 & Section 6.9.1
 - NCSS CervicalCheck – Guide for Smear takers.
 - Colposcopy and programme management - Guidelines for the NHS Cervical Screening Programme; NHSCSP Publication No. 20 – Section 10.1
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