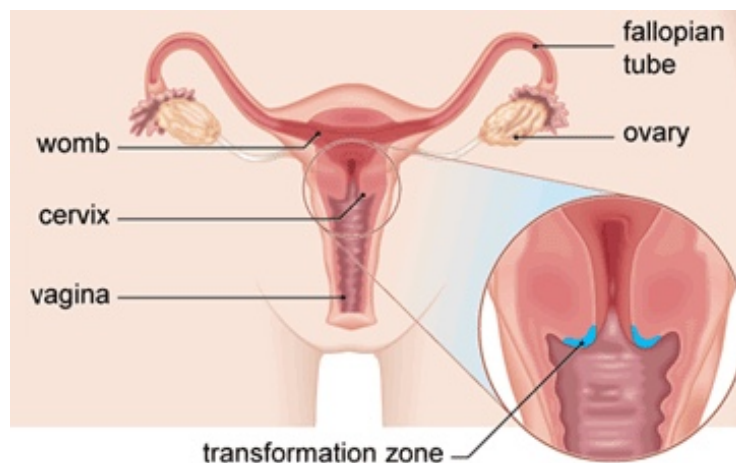


PAP SMEAR

Every 7 mins 1 woman dies of cervical cancer in India

It is a cervical smear test recommended for women between 25 and 64yrs of age. All women should have a Pap smear every 2/3 years as it can detect early changes in cervical cells. These changes if detected early and treated can save from cervical cancer .

A smear test checks for changes in the cells of your cervix (the neck of your womb) that may, if not treated, develop into cervical cancer. The diagram shows the transformation zone — this is the area where **cervical cancer** usually starts



A smear test could save your life

<u>You might not need the test if you:</u>	<u>Risks</u>
have had a hysterectomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • false positive results might wrongly show changes in your cervix (the neck of your womb)
are pregnant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the test can sometimes miss changes in your cervix
have never been sexually active as there's less chance of you having HPV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • changes can also happen between screening tests

The majority of Indian women diagnosed with Cx cancer have never had a Pap smear and 70% of these cases present in advanced stages

Preparing for a smear test

It's best to make your appointment for a smear test when you're not on your period. If you're bleeding, the sample probably won't be clear. The best time to have a smear test is halfway between one period and the next.

In the 24 hours before your smear test, if you use contraception, it's best not to have sex. Chemicals in spermicide, jelly or condoms can affect the test.

Your doctor will use an instrument called a speculum to gently open your vagina, so they can see your cervix (neck of your womb). They'll then use a small brush to take a sample of cells from your cervix. They'll send this sample to a lab to be tested.

Results

<u>No changes to your cells</u>	<u>Not enough cells to test</u>	<u>Minor changes</u>	<u>Changes which require further investigation</u>
In 9 out of 10 cases, there will be 'no changes' and you can have another smear after 2/3 years.	Sometimes there aren't enough cells in the sample to examine. This isn't unusual and you'll be invited to repeat the test in 3 months'.	Minor changes sometimes clear up on their own and don't need any treatment. You'll have another smear after some time to make sure the changes have cleared.	For the 1 in 10 women who have changes, treatment will usually be for changes to the cells before they turn into cancer.



Dr Deepti Gupta
MBBS MS MRCOG (UK)
Consultant Gynaecologist & Laparoscopic Surgeon
www.drdeeptigupta.info