

Health Care of Cervical Cancer

子宮頸癌保健須知(英文)

◆ Introduction

In Taiwan, cervical cancer is the most common malignancy in women. Early detection and treatment of the precancerous lesions can prevent the majority of cervical cancer. The primary screening test for detecting precancerous abnormalities and cervical cancers is one of the most effective known cancer screens and has successfully promoted women's health worldwide.

◆ What is cervical cancer?

Cervical cancer is a malignancy of the cervix which is the lower, narrow part of the uterus. On the surface of the cervix sometimes appear abnormal changes in cells often are the first step in a series of changes. Cervical cancer usually progresses slowly from preinvasive cervical intraepithelial neoplasia to invasive cancer over many years, which can spread to other organs and cause death. The mean age for cervical cancer is 51.4.

◆ What are the risk factors?

A number of risk factors have been identified for cervical cancer including women who have sexual intercourse at early age and have many sexual partners, especially one who had cervicitis or infected with HPV. Other risk factors include exposure before birth to the drug diethylstilbestrol, smoking and immunodeficiency.

◆ What are the symptoms of cervical cancer?

Cervical cancer often is asymptomatic nature of early stage disease. Precancerous changes of the cervix usually do not cause pain. The most common symptom is abnormal bleeding. Bleeding may occur between regular menstrual periods, postcoital, douching, or a pelvic exam. Increased vaginal discharge is another symptom of cervical cancer. These symptoms may be also caused by other health problems. It is important for a woman to see her doctor if she is having any of these symptoms. In advanced conditions, pelvic pain, pressure symptoms pertaining to the bowel or bladder may be presenting symptoms.

◆ How to prevent cervical cancer?

At present, early detection and treatment of precancerous tissue remain the most effective ways of preventing cervical cancer. The Papanicolaou (Pap) smear test for detecting precancerous abnormalities and cervical cancers is a yearly gynecologic exam when woman's age is over 30 years. In precancerous conditions, changes that occur in the cervical cells indicate that optimal treatment of these conditions can prevent cervical cancer.

◆ What is a Pap smear?

The main purpose of the Pap smear is to find cell changes that may arise from or before cancer develops. Pap smears consist of cells removed by brushing or scraping the cervix during a pelvic examination. The removed cells are evenly spread on glass slides which are specially prepared for examination under a microscope.

I have been informed the Health Care of Cervical Cancer and fully understood it.

Signed _____ Date _____



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◆ How to interpret the result of Pap Smear?

Pap smears had developed a five-grade system of classifying cells that widely used in many areas of cytologic detection of tumors ranging from:

- I Negative
- II Atypical but not neoplastic cells
- III Suspicious of neoplastic cells
- IV Strongly suggestive of neoplastic cells
- V Malignant cells

◆ Cytological classification of Pap smear vs Clinical stage of cervical cancer

There are different between the cytological classification of Pap smear and grade of cervical cancer. According to the FIGO staging system for cervix cancer as following:

- Stage 0 Carcinoma in situ, intraepithelial carcinoma. Cases of Stage 0 should not be included in any therapeutic statistics for invasive carcinoma.
- Stage I The carcinoma is strictly confined to the cervix (extension to the corpus should be disregarded).
- Stage II The carcinoma extends beyond the cervix, but has not extended on to the pelvic wall; the carcinoma involves the vagina, but not as far as the lower third.
- Stage III The carcinoma has extended on to the pelvic wall; on rectal examination there is no cancer-free space between the tumor and the pelvic wall; the tumor involves the lower third of the vagina; all cases with a hydronephrosis or nonfunctioning kidney should be included, unless they are known to be due to other cause.
- Stage IV The carcinoma has extended beyond the true pelvis or has clinically involved the mucosa of the bladder or rectum.

◆ How often should a woman have a Pap smear?

General guidelines recommend that women over 30 years old should have a Pap smear once a year and beginning it after they have sexual intercourse. Women who removed the uterus and cervix do not need to do a Pap smear.

◆ When should the Pap smear be done?

The best time for Pap smear is when she is not menstruating; it is between 10 and 20 days after the first day of the last menstrual period. For about 2 days before a Pap smear, she should avoid douching or using medicines or spermicidal foams, creams, or jellies (except as directed by a physician). Because these may wash away or hide abnormal cells.

Health is your right, keeping a good health is your responsibility

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