



National Institute for Public Health  
and the Environment  
*Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport*

# Cervical cancer *screening*

Caribbean Netherlands - Bonaire



**The cervical cancer screening is a medical examination, free of charge, for early detection of cervical cancer and conditions that can lead to cervical cancer.**

## **What is cervical cancer?**

Cervical cancer is a malignant tumor of the cervix. This form of cancer develops very slowly and is caused by a long-lasting infection from a sexually transmitted virus: the human papilloma virus (HPV).

## **Why screening for cervical cancer?**

Cervical cancer occurs most frequently in women 30 to 60 years of age. The screening test detects HPV and abnormal cells. Early detection enables treatment and the prevention of later development of cancer. That is why participating in the screening is so beneficial and important.

## **Who can participate?**

Over a period of 3 years, starting in 2022, all women between 30 and 60 years old will be invited for the free screening. Participation is on a voluntary basis.



## 1 THE INVITATION

You are invited to contact the screening coordinator. Together with the screening coordinator, you make an appointment for a cervical swab test at your general practice.



## 2 YOUR APPOINTMENT

The screening test is usually performed by the doctor's assistant. The doctor's assistant will ask you a few questions.

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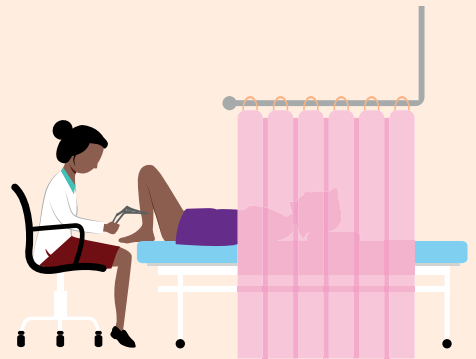
*Please tell the doctor's assistant if you feel uncomfortable about the screening test.*



## 3 THE CERVICAL SWAB TEST

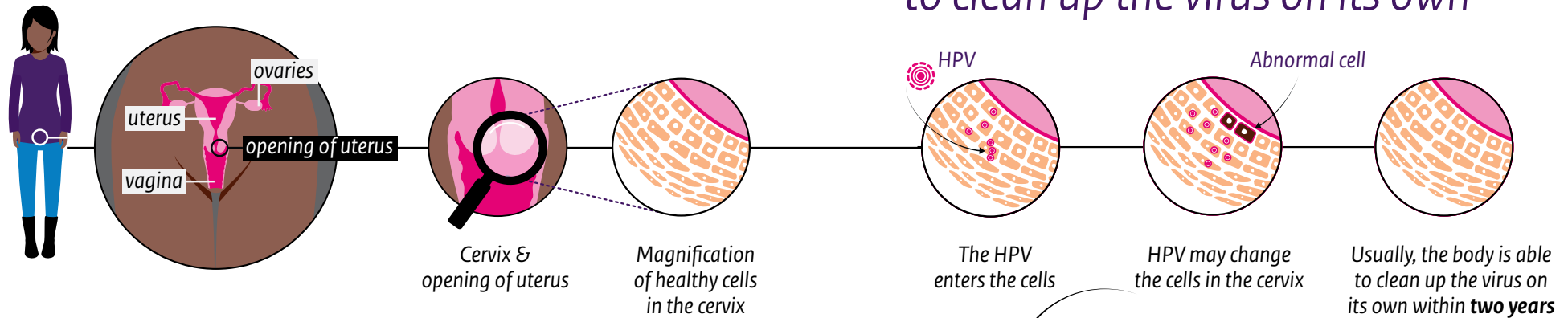
A special instrument is used for the test: the speculum. The doctor's assistant uses a small brush to sample some cells from the cervix.

After the test is done, you will receive the result 4 weeks after the screening.

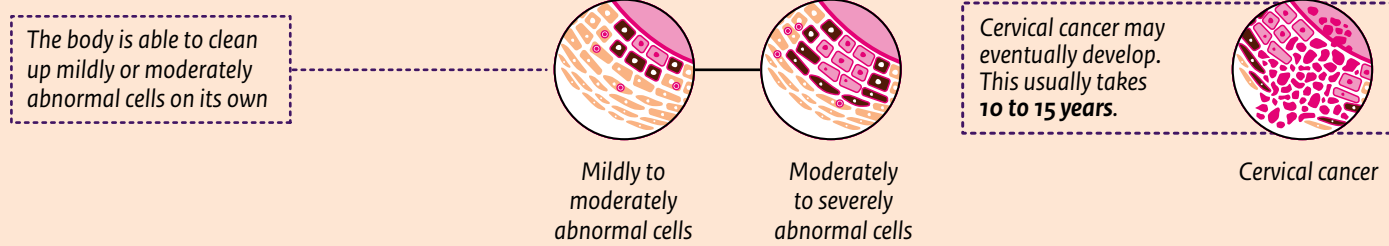


# HPV-infection

Usually, the body is able to clean up the virus on its own



Sometimes, the body does not clean up the virus in the cells



HPV occurs frequently. In 8 out of 10 women, the body is able to clear the HPV infection on its own.

# What are possible results?

You will receive your result within 4 weeks after the screening via the screening organization. If the result requires further action, your family doctor will call you for an appointment.

The following results are possible:

## **No HPV**

You do not have an increased risk of cervical cancer. Further testing is not necessary. You may participate in the screening again in the next round of invitations.

## **HPV detected, no abnormal cells**

You will receive another invitation for a cervical swab test after six months. We then check once again to ensure that no abnormal cells are present.

## **HPV and abnormal cells detected**

Further examination by a gynaecologist is necessary. The gynaecologist will decide whether treatment is necessary.

## **Unclear**

A new cervical swab test is required. The screening coordinator will make a new appointment for this in about six weeks after your first cervical swab test.

## **Contact your family doctor if you have any symptoms**

The test results from the screening are not 100% conclusive. As a result, there is always a chance that HPV or abnormal cells have been missed.

Are you experiencing any of the following symptoms?

- bleeding immediately after sex;
- postmenopausal bleeding, for example if you have not had a period for over a year;
- bleeding between periods;
- abnormal vaginal discharge.

If so, please contact your family doctor. Your family doctor can talk to you about the most suitable examination in your situation.

## **Your data and your screening results**

If you take part in the cervical cancer screening, you also give permission to use your data and the results of your screening for the screening program and any follow-up testing at the hospital.

## **What happens with the rest of the material sampled?**

Some bodily material is left over after the testing. The laboratory is required to keep this material for a period of three months, to monitor and improve the quality of the screening program. At the end of this period, the material will be destroyed.

## **Protection of your personal data and privacy**

The administrative system that we use for the screening is well secured. Only those people who need to see your information to perform the screening can use it. The general practices and RIVM comply with the legislation that protects your privacy.

With the data from your participation in cervical cancer screening, RIVM can improve the population screening through scientific research. The data from all participants combined will provide valuable information. If your data and/or the bodily material is used for scientific research, we make sure that the researcher does not know from whom the data or bodily material originated.

RIVM will only use your data and/or bodily material for (scientific) research, if you give permission to do so. You can withdraw this permission at any time, without telling the reason why.

## More information

For more information about screening or early detection regarding cervical cancer, please visit [www.rivm.nl/bvoCN](http://www.rivm.nl/bvoCN) and our Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/screeningCN](https://www.facebook.com/screeningCN).

RIVM is conducting the cervical cancer screening program in the Caribbean Netherlands.

Do you have any questions, tips, complaints or compliments about the screening program? Please contact us via [screeningCN@rivm.nl](mailto:screeningCN@rivm.nl).

RIVM has a process to review complaints, which can be found at [www.rivm.nl/en/complaints](http://www.rivm.nl/en/complaints).

This cervical cancer screening program in the Caribbean Netherlands is carried out by



**Early detection saves lives.  
Make an appointment!**

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and the Environment**

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**Committed to** *health and sustainability*