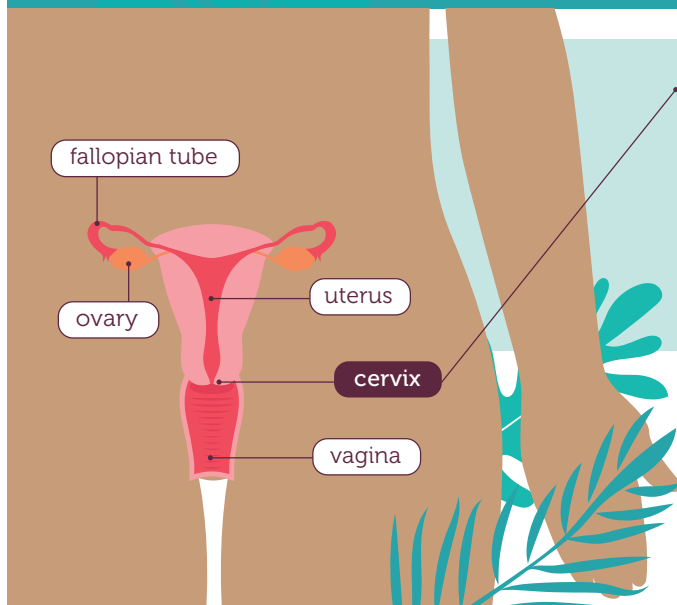




# your health your future

**Get a Cervical Screening Test**



## What is a cervix?

The cervix is part of the reproductive system. It is at the top of the vagina and connects the vagina with the uterus (the womb).

## What is HPV?

The human papillomavirus (HPV) is a common virus that is passed from person to person through sexual contact, including skin-to-skin sexual contact. HPV is the main cause of cervical cancer.

## What is cancer of the cervix?

Cancer of the cervix is a serious disease. **In the early stages, there may be no symptoms.** The Cervical Screening Test can find cervical cancer before there are any symptoms.

**The test can be life saving.**

## What is a Cervical Screening Test?

The Cervical Screening Test (previously called a Pap Smear Test) is done by a doctor or nurse to check the health of your cervix and test for HPV.

The test is quick and **safe**. It can sometimes be uncomfortable but not painful. It does not affect virginity. Your private parts will be covered when the test is being done.

You can:

- ask for a **woman doctor or nurse**
- ask for an **interpreter**
- take a friend or partner/husband.

## When do I need to have the test?

If you are 25 years old or over and have ever had any sexual contact, book an appointment with a doctor or nurse for a test.

You should **have a regular Cervical Screening Test every five years** until you are 74. Even if the result of your last test was good, you should receive a reminder to book your next test.

## What is a HPV vaccine?

In Australia, there is a vaccine which helps to protect people from HPV.

All students, including boys, in Year 7 can get a free HPV vaccine. The vaccine is given in two doses 6-12 months apart.

If you are a parent or carer, you will receive a letter to sign and send back to your school if you would like your child to be vaccinated. The vaccine will help protect your child from HPV for when they start sexual activity or get married.

If your child missed the vaccine at school, they can still get it for free until 19 years of age. If you would like to be vaccinated as an adult, ask your doctor.

If you had the HPV vaccine you still need a Cervical Screening Test from the age of 25, as the vaccine does not protect from all types of HPV.

**This vaccine is safe, it does not cause cancer and it does not create problems having children.**

A Cervical Screening Test can be life saving.

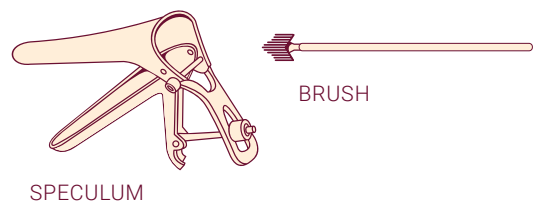
80% of women who get cervical cancer have never had a Cervical Screening Test or did not have a test in the last five years.



### How is a Cervical Screening Test done?

#### Step 1

The doctor or nurse inserts a **speculum** into the vagina. Then they use a soft small **brush** to take a sample of cells/mucus from the cervix and send it to a laboratory for testing.



#### Step 2

When the results are ready, the doctor or nurse will contact you. If not, contact the clinic for your result.

#### Step 3

If the doctor or nurse asks you to come for an appointment to get the results, it is very important that you attend.

You can collect your own sample if you have never had a Cervical Screening Test or had a test a long time ago. If your doctor or nurse agree, they will explain how.



The best protection against cervical cancer is to have a **Cervical Screening Test every 5 years.**

### Where can you have a free Cervical Screening Test?

- Doctor's (GP) clinic. Ask if they "bulk bill" (free)
- Community Health Centres
- **True Clinic** - Brisbane, Ipswich, Toowoomba, Cairns and Rockhampton

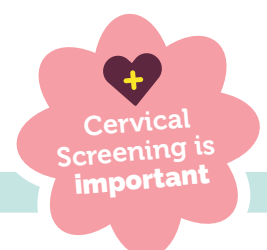
#### Contact True Clinic Brisbane



07 3250 0200

[clinicreception@true.org.au](mailto:clinicreception@true.org.au)

[true.org.au/clinic](http://true.org.au/clinic)



This resource was made in collaboration with the Culturally Responsive Health Advisory Group and community consultation.

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