

Jan. 4, 2013



January is Cervical Health Awareness Month

Human papillomavirus, or HPV, is one of the most common sexually transmitted infections in the world. At least 50 percent of sexually active people will get HPV at some point, according to the U.S. Office of Population Affairs.

HPV is actually a group of more than 100 viruses that can infect the skin.

Many people who contract HPV have no symptoms, are never diagnosed, and in many cases, the disease will clear up on its own within 24 months.

However, some types of HPV cause genital and anal warts and other types cause cervical lesions, which, over time, can develop into cancer if undetected.

HPV is spread through skin to skin contact, not through the exchange of body fluids, which means latex condoms can reduce but not totally eliminate the risk of HPV transmission.

HPV can remain dormant for years and it's often difficult to tell how or when the disease was contracted.

According to the National Cancer Institute, more than 12,000 women will be diagnosed with cervical cancer this

year and about 4,000 of those women will die from the disease.

Cervical cancer is highly preventable if the precancerous cells are detected and treated early before the cancer has a chance to develop. Cervical cancer is a slow-growing condition that usually takes years to progress.

That's why getting screened on a regular basis is so important. The best way to screen for cervical cancer is a pap smear test, which can catch potential problems before they progress.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Women's Health recommends that starting at age 21, women should have a pap smear test every two years.

Women over age 30 who have had three normal pap tests in a row should talk to their doctor about spacing out pap tests to every three years.

Depending on whether a woman has had an abnormal pap test and other factors, a doctor may ask for more frequent screenings, however.

In addition to regular testing, there are vaccines that may protect against both



types of HPV that lead to cervical cancer and genital warts.

The vaccines are recommended for girls ages 11-12 and work best before the girl ever becomes sexually active. However, catch-up vaccines also are recommended for girls and young women ages 13-26.

Males are also at risk, and can be vaccinated against HPV between ages 9-26.

The vaccines prevent the HPV types that cause 70 percent of cervical cancer cases, but won't eliminate all HPV strains or cervical cancers. That's why it's important for women to have regular pap smear tests, whether they have received the vaccine or not.

January clinics

Wednesday, Jan. 2
5-7 p.m.
Dr. Tyler Adam

Thursday, Jan. 3
11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.
Barb Peckham, CNM

Wednesday, Jan. 9
5-7 p.m.
Dr. Todd Pankratz

Thursday, Jan. 10
11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.
Barb Peckham, CNM

Wednesday, Jan. 16
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Barb Peckham, CNM

Thursday, Jan. 17
11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.
Barb Peckham, CNM

Wednesday, Jan. 23
5-7 p.m.
Dr. Tyler Adam

Thursday, Jan. 24
11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.
Barb Peckham, CNM

Wednesday, Jan. 30
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Barb Peckham, CNM

Thursday, Jan. 31
11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.
Barb Peckham, CNM

We will be closed Jan. 21 to honor the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service.

Folic Acid vital for all women who could become pregnant

Each year in the United States about 3,000 babies will have serious birth defects of the spine or brain.

At least 1,000 of these babies could be born healthy if all women got enough folic acid before becoming pregnant and in the first weeks that they are pregnant, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

Folic acid is a B vitamin that can be found in some enriched foods and vitamin pills. If some women have enough of it in their bodies, this vitamin can prevent birth defects of the

baby's spine or brain.

Spina bifida, a birth defect of the spine, can cause paralysis of the lower body with no control of bowel or bladder and learning disabilities. Another type of birth defect affects the brain and causes babies to die within a few days.

To prevent these birth defects, women need to have enough folic acid before they ever get pregnant.

Roughly half of pregnancies in the U.S. are unplanned, and that's why even women who have no plans to become preg-

nant are advised to get enough folic acid. By the time a woman realizes she is pregnant, the baby's brain and spine are already formed.

Most people get some folic acid in their diet every day. It has been added to some foods like enriched breads, pastas, rice and cereals. Check nutrition labels to see how much folic acid is present in foods.

The recommended daily serving of folic acid is 400 micrograms.

An easy way to ensure you're getting enough folic acid is to

Supplement Facts		
	Amount Per Serving	% Daily Value
Folic Acid	400 mcg	100%
Vitamin B12	6 mcg	100%
Pantothenic Acid	5 mg	50%
Calcium	450 mg	45%
Iron	18 mg	100%
Magnesium	50 mg	12%
Zinc	15 mg	100%

take a vitamin with folic acid in it. Almost every multivitamin has all the folic acid you need.

It's also important to eat a well-balanced diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables.

For more information visit www.cdc.gov/folicacid.

Hastings Family Planning

Promotes the well being of families, responsible behavior, and healthy babies.

Prevents unintended pregnancies through education, including abstinence and contraceptive services.

Allows planning and timing of pregnancies.

Remember...

Hastings Family Planning sells both male and female condoms. Male condoms are priced as low as 25 cents each. Female condoms are 50 cents each. We also provide water-based lubricant for free. Remember, be smart about your body and practice safe sex!

Hastings Family Planning

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