

Cervical Cancer Awareness

Module 6

Aims

- ▶ Increase awareness of what cervical cancer is.
- ▶ Understand how it is diagnosed and treated.
- ▶ Learn about the possible signs and the screening services that are available.
- ▶ Learn about screening uptake in Leeds and how we can encourage more people to attend.

What is Cervical Cancer?

- ▶ The cervix is the lower part of the womb (uterus), also called the neck of the womb. It is a small round organ and a strong muscle.
- ▶ Cervical cancer is when abnormal cells in the lining of the cervix grow uncontrollably and eventually form a growth (tumour).
- ▶ If not caught early, cancer cells gradually grow into the surrounding tissues and may spread to other body areas.
- ▶ Cervical cancer is most common in women in their early 30's.
- ▶ Most cervical cancer cases are caused by infection of certain types of the human papillomavirus (HPV).

How is it Diagnosed?

- ▶ You usually start by seeing your GP if you have possible symptoms.
- ▶ GP may complete a physical examination.
- ▶ Your doctor might need to refer you to hospital for tests, such as a colposcopy to have a closer look at your cervix.
- ▶ Refer you directly to a specialist.
- ▶ May also be diagnosed through cervical screening.

Other tests:

- blood tests.
- biopsies, including a loop excision of the transformation zone (LLETZ) or cone biopsy.
- CT, MRI or PET-CT scan.

How is it Treated?

Treatment for cervical cancer depends on several factors:

- ▶ The type of cervical cancer you have.
- ▶ How big it is.
- ▶ Whether it has spread (the stage) and the grade.
- ▶ Your general health.

How is it Treated?

The most common treatments for cervical cancer are:

- ▶ Surgery.
- ▶ Chemotherapy with radiotherapy (chemoradiotherapy).
- ▶ Brachytherapy (internal radiation therapy)
- ▶ Chemotherapy.
- ▶ Radiotherapy.
- ▶ Targeted cancer drug.
- ▶ Immunotherapy drug (cancer treatment that helps your own immune system recognise and destroy cancer cells)
- ▶ Symptom control.

Screening Rates

Cervical Screening	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24
Lower Age Range (25-49) - 3.5 year coverage %	66.2%	66.3%	66.6%	66.8%	66.9%	66.9%	66.5%
Higher Age Range (50-64) - 5.5 year coverage %	75.6%	75.6%	75.7%	75.7%	75.7%	75.6%	75.6%

National target 80%
Long data lag for uptake levels.

Symptoms

- ▶ Unusual bleeding i.e. between periods
- ▶ Pain during sexual intercourse
- ▶ Pain in your lower back or pelvis
- ▶ Changes to vaginal discharge.

Cervical Screening (Smear Test)

- ▶ Looks for cell abnormalities in the cervix
- ▶ Invited aged 25-64
- ▶ Every 5 years (25-65) (More frequent screening if HPV has been detected)

Cervical Screening Top Tips!

- You can talk to your nurse or doctor about any worries.
- You can ask for the first appointment of the day.
- You can ask for a longer/double appointment.
- You can ask about evening or weekend appointments.
- You can take someone you trust with you (even if they are male).
- You can listen to music.
- Wear something you feel comfortable in.
- Remember that you are in control.
- If you feel in pain or uncomfortable, you can ask for a smaller speculum to be used.
- You can ask for an interpreter.
- Ask questions and reward yourself!



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3 Key Steps to Giving Brief Advice

- ▶ **Raise the issue** during day to day contact with a person.
- ▶ **Give tips and messages** about wellbeing and cancer. Dispel myths.
- ▶ **Signpost** people who want to know more (or who need more in-depth support) to local agencies which can help.



Further Information

Be sure to get information on cancer or screening from reputable sites:

- ▶ Cancer Research UK.
- ▶ The Eve Appeal.
- ▶ NHS.
- ▶ LeedsHealth.co.uk.
- ▶ Macmillan.