



**District Health
Department #10**
Healthy People, Healthy Communities



JANUARY IS CERVICAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

January 19, 2024 – The Northern Michigan Public Health Alliance (NMPHA) and District Health Department #10 (DHD#10) are joining the nation in observing January as Cervical Health Awareness Month. It is a time to raise awareness about cervical cancer, Human Papillomavirus (HPV) disease, and the importance of getting screened. DHD#10 is reminding residents that cervical cancer is nearly 100% preventable with recommended vaccinations and routine screening.

HPV is the most common sexually transmitted infection (STI); 85% of people will get an HPV infection in their lifetime. HPV is a known cause of cervical cancer, as well as some anal cancer, throat cancer, and genital warts.

With the availability of the HPV vaccine, we can protect against the virus that causes more than 90% of cervical cancers. An HPV test can also detect the presence of this virus before cancer develops. By regular screening with a Pap test (alone or in conjunction with an HPV test), your doctor can detect precancerous conditions in the cervix, or detect the cancer in early stages. When cervical cancer is found early, it is highly treatable and associated with long survival and good quality of life.

"Medicine has given us incredible life-saving tools in the form of highly accurate screening tests and safe, effective vaccines," said DHD#10 Family Planning/STI Coordinator, Ashlie Baker. "We have the means to prevent cervical cancer."

The vaccine is recommended for individuals aged 9-26 years. If your teen has not received the vaccine yet, talk to their doctor about getting it as soon as possible. When given as recommended and before exposure to this common virus, it is highly effective.

DHD#10 connects women to breast and cervical cancer screening services through the Michigan Breast and Cervical Cancer Control and Navigation Program (BC3NP). If you need cervical cancer screening or have an abnormal mammogram or Pap test and your insurance does not completely pay for additional tests, visit <https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/keep-mi-healthy/chronicdiseases/cancer/bc3np/bc3np-locations> for qualification guidelines.

Most health insurances cover the HPV vaccine, including Medicaid and the Healthy Michigan plan. If you or your child do not have insurance that covers vaccines, contact DHD#10 at 888-217-3904 for low-cost vaccine options.

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