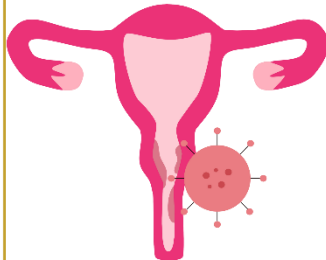




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Cervical Cancer



What is cervical cancer?

Cervical cancer is an abnormal growth of cells in the area where the vagina (birth canal) connects to the uterus called the cervix.

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a virus that is spread by physical contact and causes 99% of cervical cancer cases.

How common is cervical cancer?

Cervical cancer is the fourth most common cancer in the world, with an estimated 660,000 cases reported in 2022.

While the eighth is in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, where 358 women are diagnosed, and 179 women die annually between the ages of 15-44.



What are the causes of cervical cancer?

The main cause of cervical cancer is infection with the **human papillomavirus (HPV)**, especially types 16 and 18. However, the immune system eliminates most cases of infection without symptoms, and in other cases the virus remains latent until it develops into cancer after 15 to 20 years or less (5 to 10 years).

What are the risk factors for cervical cancer?

- Unprotected sexual intercourse.
- Weakened immunity (such as HIV infection).
- Using birth control pills for five years or more.
- Smoking.



What are the symptoms of cervical cancer?

Cervical cancer does not cause any symptoms in its early stages, but it is discovered through early examination and symptoms usually appear later in the development of the disease in the form of:

- Abnormal vaginal bleeding, either irregular or very heavy or in the form of drops after intercourse
- **Abnormal vaginal discharge**: heavy and foul-smelling
- Pain during intercourse
- Pelvic pain



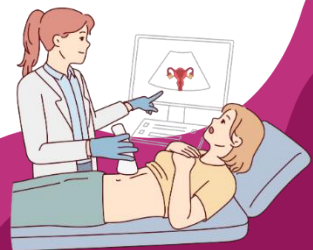
What are the treatment options?

When it comes to determining the best treatment for cervical cancer, the stage of the cancer and whether it has spread to other organs are important factors in choosing the treatment. Other factors include the patient's desires and health status.

Early stages: Treated with surgery.

Surgical options:

1. Cervical conization (a fertility-preserving procedure) which is the removal of a cone-shaped piece of cervical tissue with a surgical blade or laser.
2. Cervical hysterectomy the doctor removes only the cervix and the upper part of the vagina.



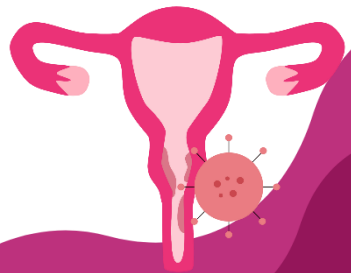
What are the treatment options?

Cervical hysterectomy (cervical removal ((trachelectomy)) has several types:

- **Simple hysterectomy:** removal of the uterus and cervix only.
- **Radical hysterectomy:** removal of the cervix and surrounding tissues, the uterus, fallopian tubes, the upper part of the vagina, and the lymph nodes.

Advanced stages:

For best results, chemotherapy is combined with radiation to stop its growth.

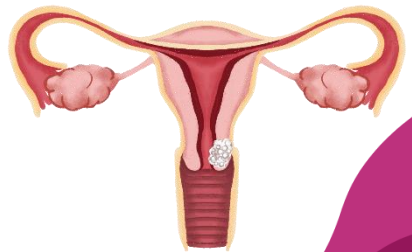


What are the treatment options?

Other options: Immunotherapy.

The body's immune system is boosted by taking substances that the body produces or that are made in the laboratory to enable it to fight the disease.

For example, Pembrolizumab Keytruda is used to treat recurrent or returning cervical cancer after chemotherapy.



What is the treatment during pregnancy?

Cervical cancer is uncommon during pregnancy, and early detection does not require urgent intervention, but some of them multiply quickly or are discovered late after spreading, which requires urgent treatment.

Taking the appropriate treatment depends on several reasons such as the age of the pregnancy, the desire to preserve it, and the extent of the spread of cancer.

Treatment during pregnancy is divided into two stages:

1- The first trimester of pregnancy:


- **Early stage of cancer:** Treatment is postponed until the end of pregnancy or after delivery, and it is recommended to expedite delivery to start treatment.





Treatment during pregnancy is divided into two stages:

Late stage of cancer: the tumor is increasing or spreading outside the cervix, and during this stage the pregnancy cannot continue, and treatment is then done with one of the following:

- 1- Surgical removal of the uterus, cervix, and surrounding tissue.
 - 2- Chemotherapy to kill cancer cells or stop their growth.
 - 3- Radiation therapy using high-energy X-rays or other radiation to destroy cancer cells or prevent their multiplication by damaging their DNA.
- 

Treatment during pregnancy is divided into two stages:

2- The remaining two-thirds of pregnancy:

❖ Early stage:

- Removal of a cone from the cervix with a surgical blade or laser.
- Removal of the cervix with the upper part of the vagina and the surrounding lymph nodes.

❖ Late stage:

Chemotherapy such as Cisplatin is recommended as it does not harm the fetus in the last two-thirds of pregnancy



When is the health check-up after treatment?

The patient visits the doctor every 3-4 months for 2-3 years, then every 6 months for 3-5 years, then every year for life.

What is the survival rate for cervical cancer?

The five-year survival rate for cervical cancer patients is 70%.



Sources and references:

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All images from Canva.com

Review and Audit:

The content of this booklet has been reviewed by the Obstetrics and Gynecology Consultants at King Fahad University Hospital.

Obstetrics and Gynecology

Health Awareness Unit

IAU-24-627



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