



Kathleen Sebelius, Governor
Roderick L. Bremby, Secretary

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND ENVIRONMENT

www.kdheks.gov

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KDHE Promotes Cancer Screenings During Cervical Cancer Awareness Month

Cervical cancer was once the number one cancer killer of women, but now numbers have greatly declined due to the widely available and reliable Pap test. This screening test indicates if further testing is needed so cancer can be detected and treated when it is still curable. January is Cervical Cancer Awareness Month, and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) is reminding women to schedule an annual well-woman checkup.

“When cervical conditions are discovered and treated at an early stage, the survival rate is nearly 100 percent,” said Roderick L. Bremby, Secretary of KDHE. “Cervical cancer is normally a very slow growing cancer and a Pap test can often detect pre-cancerous cells which can be removed before the cancer has developed or spread.”

Although the number of cervical cancer cases has declined in the last 50 years, an estimated 4,600 women will still die from cervical cancer in the U.S. this year. In Kansas women, cervical cancer accounts for approximately two percent of all cancer, with an average of 107 new cases diagnosed each year. About 35 percent of those cases occurred in women ages 55 and older. About 33 Kansas women die of cervical cancer annually. It is important women be tested for cervical cancer because six out of 10 cervical cancers occur in women who have never received a Pap test or have not been tested in the past five years.

“More African-American and Hispanic women get cervical cancer and are diagnosed at later stages of the disease than women of other races or ethnicities, possibly because of decreased access to Pap testing or follow-up treatment,” said Bremby. “It is important for women of all races and ethnicities to seek early detection and treatment.” In Kansas, African-American women die of cervical cancer at a rate twice that of white women.

In addition to screening tests, a vaccine is available which can prevent cervical cancer. The vaccine targets the human papillomavirus (HPV), which is present in more than 99 percent of cervical cancer cases. The vaccine is recommended for girls to help prevent cervical cancer later in life. Parents are encouraged to talk with their daughter’s health care provider for more information about the vaccine.

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KDHE promotes cervical cancer screening for all women. KDHE's Early Detection Works program provides breast and cervical cancer screening for uninsured women age 40 to 64 who meet income guidelines through a network of contracting providers across the state. For more information about the program, visit www.preventionworkskansas.com or call toll free 1-877-277-1368 to see if you qualify. Early Detection Works!

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As the state's environmental protection and public health agency, KDHE promotes responsible choices to protect the health and environment for all Kansans.

Through education, direct services and the assessment of data and trends, coupled with policy development and enforcement, KDHE will improve health and quality of life. We prevent illness, injuries and foster a safe and sustainable environment for the people of Kansas.