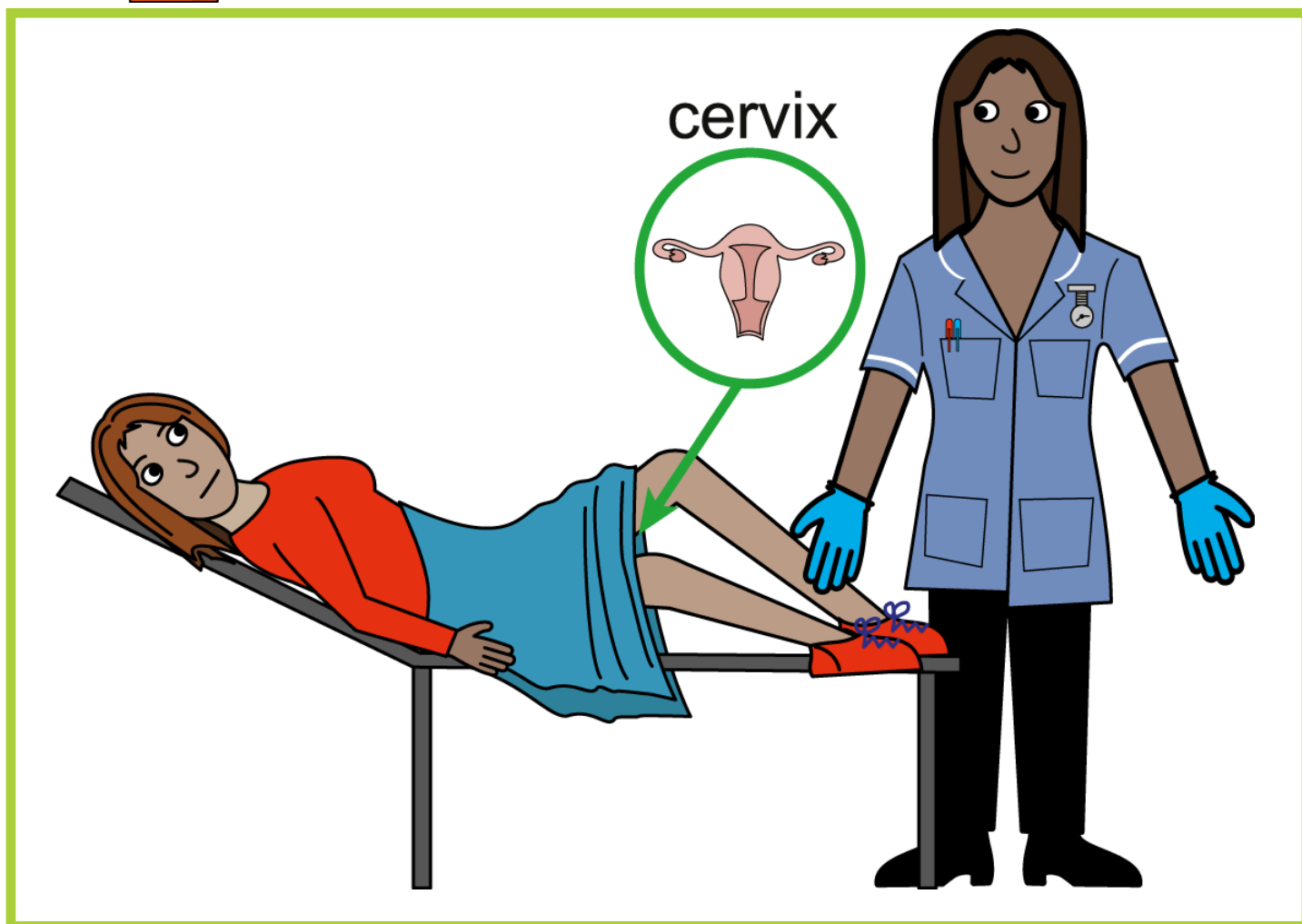




Having a smear test

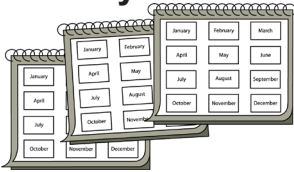


An easy read guide about a health test for women aged 25 to 64



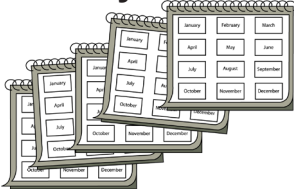
Smear Test

3 years

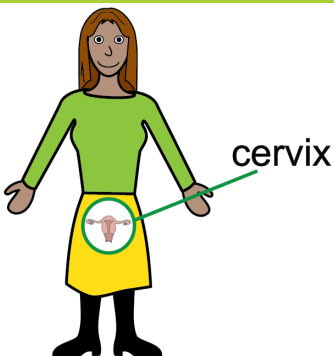


If you are aged 25 to 49, the NHS will offer you the test every 3 years.

5 years

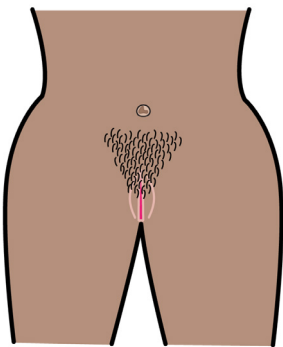


If you are aged 50 to 64, the NHS will offer you the test every 5 years.



This booklet tells you about why women should have a smear test.

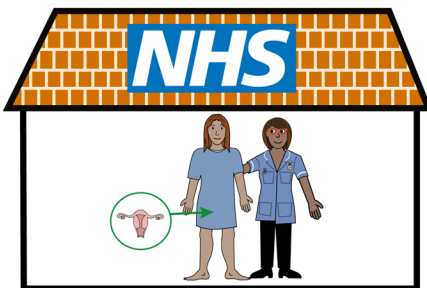
The test is also called cervical screening.



The test looks for changes in your cervix.

Women have a cervix that is inside your body at the top of your vagina. You cannot see it.

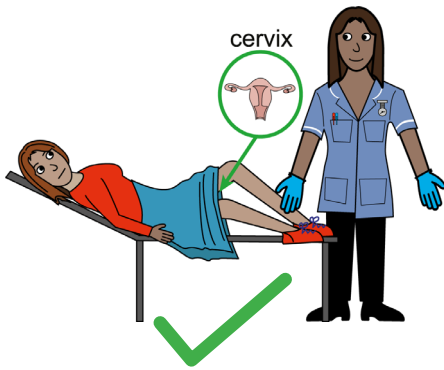
You might call your vagina by a different name like front bottom, private parts or down below.



Cervical screening test looks for a virus that can be in the cervix.

For a very small number of women the virus can be serious and this can be the cause of cervical cancer.

It is a very serious illness that you can die from if you do not get treatment quickly.



Having a smear test can stop you getting cancer.

Finding the cancer and getting treatment early can save thousands of lives every year.

Cervical Cancer



The virus that can cause cervical cancer is called HPV.

Lots of women have this virus

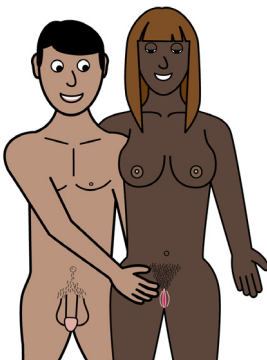
Most women who have the virus do not know they have it, this is why it is important to have the test.



You can get the virus from any kind of sex or sexual touching.

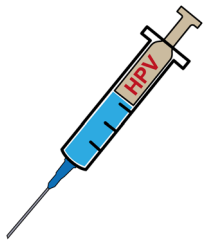


This could include sexual touching with a woman or man.



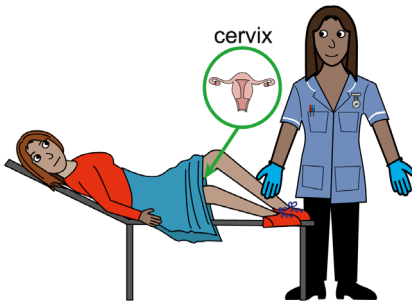
You should have the smear test even if you have not ever had sex.

Cervical Cancer



Girls are offered an injection when they are 12 or 13.

This protects girls against the virus that causes cervical cancer.



Having a smear test is important even if you had the injection when you were younger.

Having a smear test is the only way to find out if your cervix is healthy.

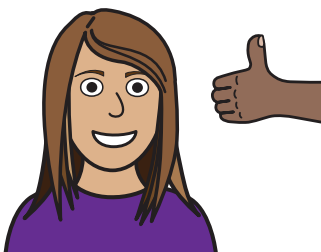
Your Choice



It is your choice if you have the smear test or not.

Good points

Screening can find the virus that causes cervical cancer.



Screening can find unhealthy cells.

We can remove unhealthy cells before they turn into cancer.

Bad points

Sometimes screening can miss unhealthy cells.



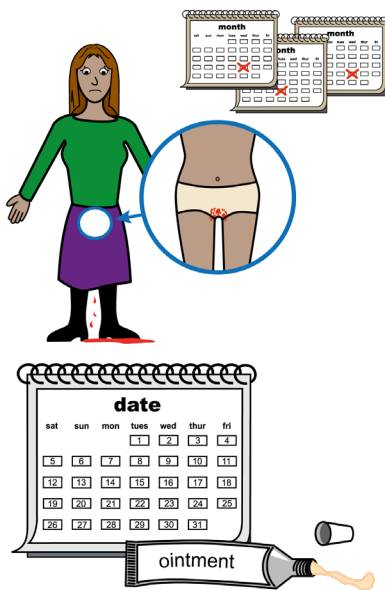
A very small number of the tests find problems that are not really there.

The screening test can be a bit uncomfortable, but it does not last long

Having a Test



You will get a letter asking you if you want to book your smear test.



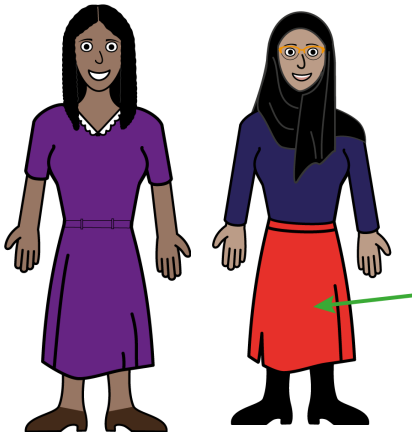
You should try to book a day when you are not due to have your period.

Do not use any creams on your vagina in the 2 days before your test.

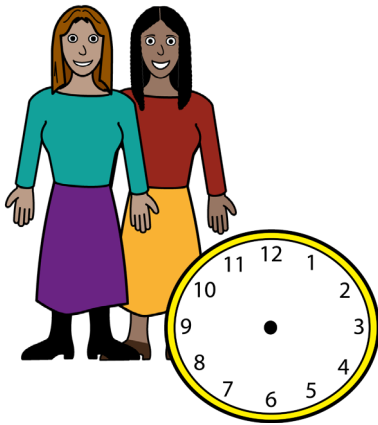


Your smear test is usually done by a lady nurse or doctor.

Ask the reception staff to book your appointment with a lady.

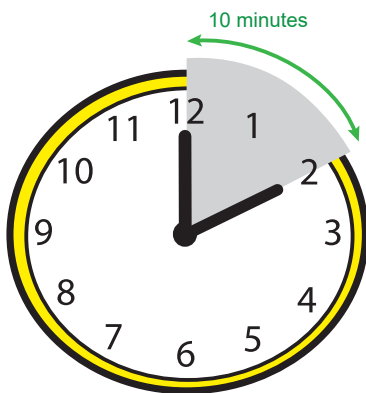


Wearing a skirt or dress can make the test easier.



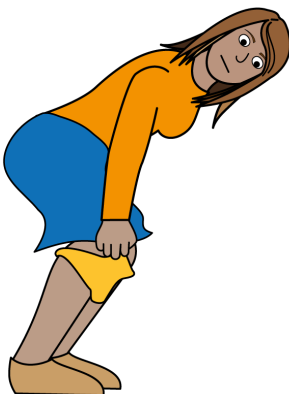
You can take a friend, carer or relative with you.

You can ask for a longer appointment.

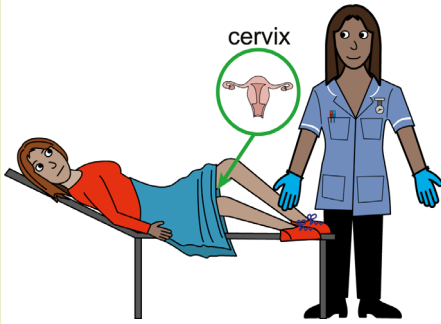


The test takes only a minute or two.

The whole appointment usually takes about 10 minutes.



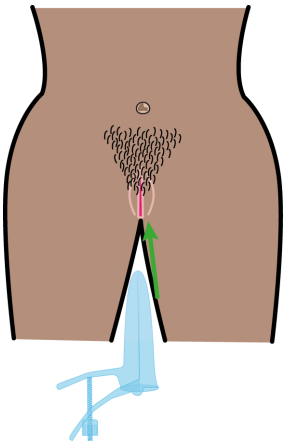
Once you are in a private clinic room the doctor or nurse will ask you to take your knickers off.



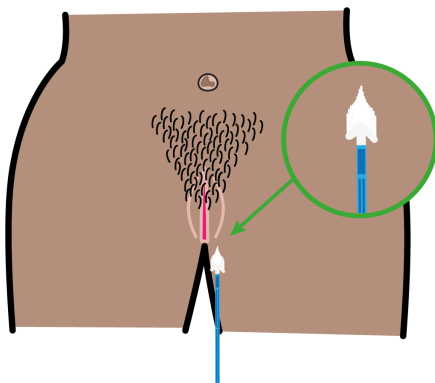
The nurse or doctor will ask you to lie on a bed with your knees bent.

They will ask you to open your legs and keep your feet together.

Don't worry you will have a paper sheet over you.



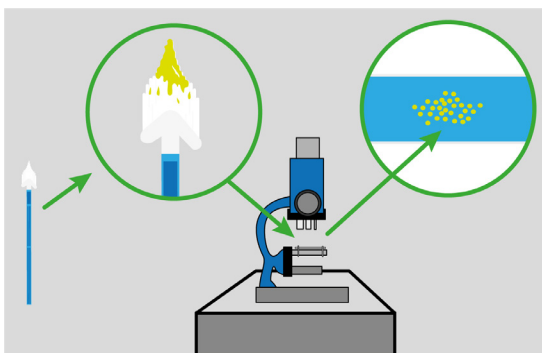
The nurse or doctor will put a speculum in your vagina so they can see your cervix.



They will use a small brush to take some cells from your cervix.

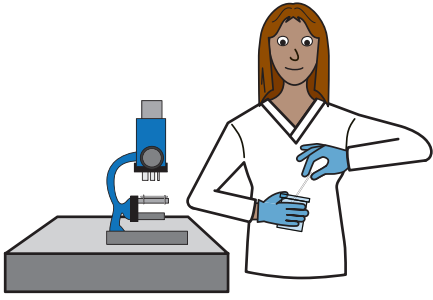
It should not be painful but it may be uncomfortable.

You can stop the test at any time.



The cells on the small brush are then sent to be tested for the virus.

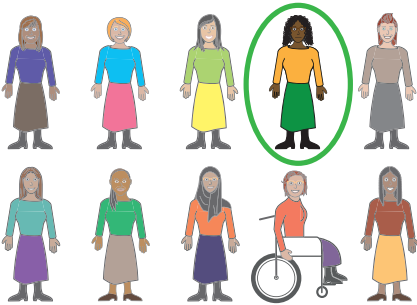
Smear test results



The test will look for the virus and unhealthy cells.



You will get the result of your smear test in a letter or someone will telephone you.



9 out of every 10 women have a normal result.

This means your cervix is probably healthy.

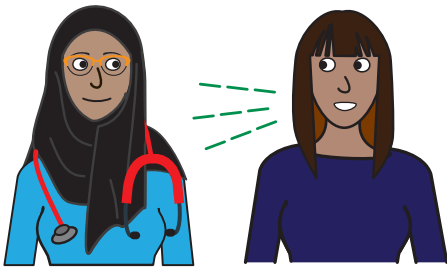
1 out of 10 women might need to have more tests.

This means you may have unhealthy cells or the virus.

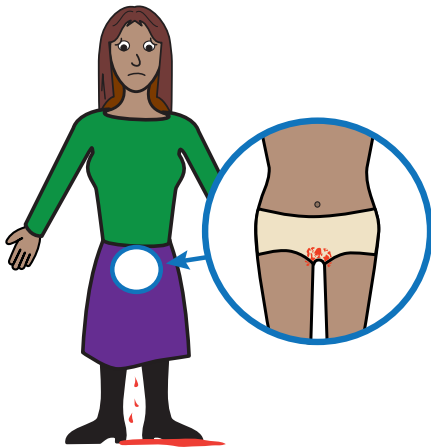


If you need to have more tests, your result letter will tell you what to do.

Changes to look for



You should go to your doctor if you notice any changes at any time.

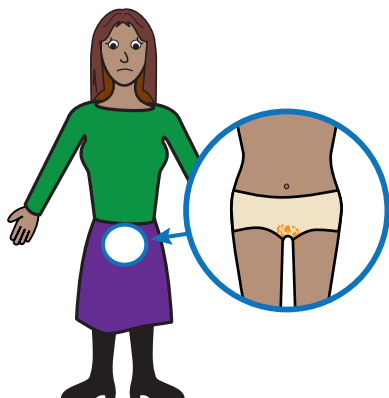


Bleeding from your vagina when it is not your period.

Bleeding after your periods have stopped.

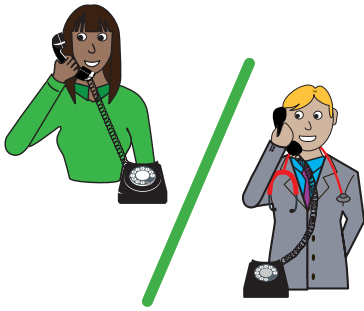


Pain or bleeding during or after having sex.

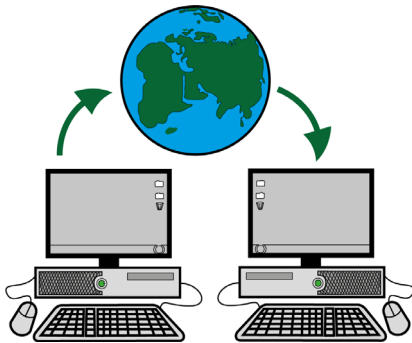


Any different fluids from your vagina.

More information



You can telephone your doctor.



NHS.UK website:
www.nhs.uk/cervical

Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust website:
www.jostrust.org.uk



Leeds Cancer Awareness
<https://www.learningdisabilityservice-leeds.nhs.uk/get-checked-out/resources/your-health/national-screening-partners/leeds-cancer-awareness/>



Health Facilitation Team
<https://www.learningdisabilityservice-leeds.nhs.uk/get-checked-out/resources/>

Notes

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