

Stop Cervical Cancer Before It Starts

Prevention is still the best weapon women have against cancers and other illness. Cervical cancer is almost always preventable with the right screenings and vaccinations.

You may be able to stop cervical cancer before it starts:

- **Get tested.** Pap HPV tests are a well-proven way to find pre-cancers early. At this point, they can be treated before they can turn into cancer.
- **Don't let down your guard.** Vaccines don't prevent all types of HPV. Keep up a regular schedule of Pap tests even if you've gotten the vaccines.
- **Get vaccinated early.** HPV vaccines work best when given at age 11 or 12. They provide little, if any, benefit after age 26.
- **Don't smoke.** Smoking may also put you at risk for cervical cancer. It's always a good idea to stop.

Cervical cancer occurs most often in midlife in women younger than 50. Women over 65 can still be at risk. Discuss risk factors with your doctor. Together you can decide on the screening schedule that works best for you.

Source: American Cancer Society

Heart disease

The steady beat of a healthy heart. It's a sign of good health we often take for granted. But keeping it pumping 24/7 for a lifetime doesn't happen automatically.

Heart disease is the number one cause of death in the U.S. each year. The main cause? Plaque that builds up in your arteries, narrowing them and reducing blood flow to the heart.

Smoking, an unhealthy diet and not getting enough exercise promote the production of plaque. Having high cholesterol, high blood pressure or diabetes also increase the risk.

February is American Heart Month. It's a great time to take stock of your heart health. A healthy heart – what better Valentine to give those you love?

On average, someone in the U.S. dies from stroke every four minutes. Immediate care can make all the difference. Act if you see these symptoms: face drooping on one side, one arm that is weak or numb, slurred speech, or an inability to speak clearly. Call 9-1-1 even if the symptoms go away.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and American Heart Association