

Cervical cancer. What is it.?

Cervical cancer is the second most common female cancer in India. It is cancer of the uterine Cervix. The uterus is a pear-shaped female organ which is divided into an upper part, the fundus, a middle part the body and a lower part known as the Cervix. This part has an opening where menstrual blood comes out. Cancer of the mouth of the womb i.e., Cervix is called cervical cancer.

Cervical cancer is caused by a virus human papilloma virus. HPV virus is a common virus transmitted through sexual contact. Many of us carry this virus in the vagina without any harm but some of these viruses cause cancer of the Cervix most common is HPV 16 and 18. 99 percent of cervical cancer is related to infection of high-risk HPV viruses.

The good part about this cancer is it is both preventable and can be treated in the early stages to effect a complete cure. It has an almost 10 yearlong precancerous period during which time it can be detected and treated.

Cervical cancer can present with recurrent vaginal discharge. Spotting during the period and bleeding after intercourse but in most cases, there are no symptoms until late-stage disease.

We can pick up abnormal cells which might develop cancer by a dual test the Pap smear and the HPV testing. Both of these tests are done by the gynaecologist in the clinic during the gynaecology check-up.

Cervical cancer can be prevented by a triad of tests Pap smear HPV testing and colposcopy. There vaccines which also prevent this cancer