Cervical smear - a test that saves lives
Important information for those turning 25 in 2019

1. Book an appointment for a smear test with your GP
2. Take a smear
3. Reduce your chances of developing cervical cancer

It is important, even for young, healthy women who have been vaccinated against HPV, to have cervical smears (cervical screening tests).

Having regular smear tests may detect cell changes before they develop into cervical cancer. Cell changes are not the same as cervical cancer and usually do not give symptoms. Cell changes can be easily treated.

The start of a good habit

It is recommended that women between the ages of 25 and 69 have cervical screening tests regularly. Regular cervical screening tests significantly reduce the chances of developing cervical cancer. You will receive a reminder from The Cervical Cancer Screening Programme, when it is time for the next screening test.

Best regards,
Ameli Tropé
Head of the Norwegian Cervical Cancer Screening Programme

For further information, please see reverse

You will find all the information you need in this letter. For further information, please visit: krefregisteret.no/en/cervix
HPV is the cause of cervical cancer
Severe cell changes and cervical cancer are caused by a long-term infection by the human papilloma virus (HPV), which is the most common sexually transmitted infection. It is important to have regular cervical screening tests, even if you are young, healthy and have been vaccinated against HPV.

80% of sexually active women and men are infected by HPV at some point in their lives.

90% of HPV infections clear within 2 years.

A chronic HPV infection increases the risk of developing severe cell changes.

One third of the severe cell changes may develop into cancer if not treated.

A cervical screening test is conducted during a gynaecological examination
The examination takes a few minutes and is not painful, but may feel a little uncomfortable. Your doctor usually gets the test result within a month. In case of an abnormal test result, your doctor will provide you with information for further follow-up. If the test comes back normal, it is recommended that you have a new screening test in three years. The Cervical Cancer Screening Programme will send you a reminder.

Your GP takes the cervical smear
Your GP usually takes the cervical smear, but can also make a referral to a gynaecologist, should you prefer. In some cases, midwives also provide them. You will be charged a deductible fee for the examination.

Important to consider before taking a screening test
Avoid having the test during menstruation. You should also avoid the use of tampons, all types of vaginal creams and medicines a day before the test, as these may have a negative effect on the test results.
A word of advice: Feel free to bring along a friend; Some find it convenient to wear a dress.

No cervical screening test is 100% reliable
Having regular cervical screening tests reduces the chances of developing cervical cancer significantly, but severe cell changes may remain undetected for various reasons. Even if your test result is normal, it is important that you contact your doctor immediately if you experience symptoms such as persistent irregular bleeding, bleeding after intercourse, abnormal discharge or persistent abdominal pain. Please visit [https://www.kreftregisteret.no/en/cervix](https://www.kreftregisteret.no/en/cervix) for information on the advantages and disadvantages of having the cervical screening test.

Opt out/ Reservation and privacy
The Cancer Registry of Norway stores information about your test results. You can make a reservation against the registration of information related to normal findings being stored in the Cancer Registry. You also have the right to refuse the sharing of your test result history with healthcare professionals. You can request access to your personal information with the Cancer Registry.

Don’t hesitate to contact your doctor or us if you have any questions regarding cervical screening.

You can find more information about HPV and cervical screening at: [https://www.kreftregisteret.no/en/cervix](https://www.kreftregisteret.no/en/cervix)