

WHAT EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT HPV

WHAT IS HPV?

Human papillomavirus (or HPV) is a group of over 100 related viruses. Some HPV types cause genital warts; some cause cancers. HPV affecting the anus, cervix, penis, throat, tongue, vagina, and surrounding tissues can cause abnormal cell development which may develop into cancer in some, but not all, people.

HOW DID IT GET... THERE?

HPV is spread by skin-to-skin contact, including by fingers, tongues, and possibly toys. Women and transmen should know that HPV can spread from the cervix to the anus causing 'sequential infection'. Even if you never have anal sex, HPV can make its way to the anal and surrounding area to cause cancer.



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WHO'S AT RISK?

Almost all sexually active people have been exposed to HPV at some point. Once you're exposed to HPV, your body may develop an immune response to control the virus and reduce the risk of developing abnormal cells. In some people the immune response doesn't control HPV, and abnormal cells can develop.

People on chemotherapy, living with HIV, or who smoke tobacco, are less likely to control the virus, and more likely to develop an abnormality.



DYSPLASIA: HSIL

Abnormal cell development known as high-grade squamous intraepithelial lesions (HSIL) can progress to cancer in a small number of people. A 20-minute procedure called high resolution anoscopy (HRA) with a biopsy can detect HSIL.

NORMAL CELLS MAY BECOME CANCER CELLS

