



IF you are between the between the ages of 18 and 69 and have ever had sexual intercourse, you need to have a PAP test.

## *It is important to live in balance.*

**BALANCE** on this path in the circle of life means:

Having regular Pap tests so that cervical changes **can be found early enough** to be treated and cured.

Keeping appointments for any follow-up that is needed.

Asking questions of your doctor, nurse or healthcare provider.

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Contents of this pamphlet were used with permission of the Alberta Cervical Cancer Screening Program

For more information, contact your local health care provider, your Community Health Nurse, or the BC Cancer Agency

If you would like the mobile cervical screening program to come to your community, have your Community Health Nurse contact:

For more information on prevention programs, please visit:

[www.bccancer.bc.ca/PPI/Screening/Cervical/default.htm](http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/PPI/Screening/Cervical/default.htm)



WHEN was your last PAP Test?



First Nations Chiefs' Health Committee  
1205 – 100 Park Royal South  
West Vancouver, BC V7T 1A2

Telephone: (604) 913-2080  
Fax: (604) 913-2081  
Toll Free: 1-866-913-0033  
Web: [www.fnchc.ca](http://www.fnchc.ca)

When

## WHO should have a PAP Test?

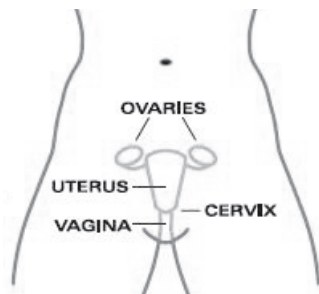
- If you are between the ages of 18 and 69 and have ever had sexual intercourse, you need to have a Pap test
- You may still need to have a Pap test, even if you have had a hysterectomy (an operation to remove the uterus and maybe ovaries or cervix).

Talk to your healthcare provider (doctor, nurse or other provider).

## *The greatest risk factor for cervical cancer is not having a Pap test.*

## WHAT is a PAP Test?

- A Pap test is a simple test that can find changes in the cervix (see picture).
- Your healthcare provider will gently put an instrument called a speculum in your vagina so that he or she can see your cervix.
- A small number of cells are gently taken from the cervix.



Source: PEI Cervical Cancer Screening Program

# Supporting the Health and Wellness of First Nations in British Columbia

- The cells are sent to a laboratory to be looked at under a microscope.
- A Pap test does not check for STDs/STIs (sexually transmitted diseases/infections).

## HOW do you prepare for a PAP Test?

Make an appointment with your healthcare provider to have a Pap test.

**Since the Pap test (like many medical tests) is not perfect, it is important to be tested on a regular basis to lessen the chance of missing any abnormal cell changes.**

## Before the visit:

- Write down any questions you may want to ask.
- Be prepared to talk about your medical history.
- Think of any unusual signs you may have (ie., bleeding between periods or bleeding after sex).
- Know when your last period started.

## For best results:

- Book your appointment for a time when you are not having your period.
- Avoid douching (using a water solution to clean the inside of the vagina) for 24 hours before the test.
- Avoid having sex for 24 hours before the test.
- Avoid use of birth control creams or jellies before the test.

## WHAT do you do after a PAP Test?

Follow up with your healthcare provider regarding Pap test results.

***Cancer of the cervix can usually be cured if found and treated early.***

