

Cervical Cancer Screening Script for Secured Messages;

Hi, I am Dr. Ruth Goldenberg, the Chief of the Women's Health Department at Kaiser Permanente in the Napa-Solano Service Area. I am here to tell you about a test that can save your life.

Did you know that Cervical Cancer is caused by a virus transmitted during intimate contact and is almost completely preventable with screening? Any woman can get cervical cancer, and women

who have early cervical cancer usually have no symptoms and feel perfectly healthy.

So what's the best way to protect yourself? Get a pap test. Pap tests can find changes in cervical cells before they become cancer.

If you're over 30, in addition to your pap test, we recommend testing for high risk HPV types or Human Papillomavirus. This is because these HPV viruses are very common, and in most women go away without treatment. In some cases, however, the HPV virus does not go away and can cause changes in cells that over time can become cancer. Keep in mind that cervical cancer and pre-cancer is slow growing and takes many years to develop. If we catch it early, it can be completely cured through simple procedures done in the office, but we can only detect early cell changes if you get tested.

I know that getting a pap test can be a little embarrassing or maybe even a little uncomfortable, but our OB/GYN clinicians do everything we can to make this test as easy and comfortable as possible.

It's a simple procedure; after getting undressed, your doctor or nurse practitioner will use a warm speculum to take a look at your cervix. We use a brush on the surface of your cervix to take a sample of those cells. The whole test takes only about a minute. So who should get the pap test? All women between 21 and 65 should get a pap test every three years, even if you have had the HPV vaccine.

A pap test is important regardless of your sexual history or orientation. If you've had one sexual partner for many years or no sexual partners in the last few years or your partner's a woman, we still recommend getting tested because the HPV virus is so common. Remember, we can still do your pap test even when you are on your period. As a wife and mother myself, I know how hard it is for you to find time to take care of yourself, but it's really important to your family that you're healthy. So please, if you are between 21 and 65 get a pap test every three years. Do it for yourself. Do it for your family. Live well and be well.