

All about  
**Cervical screening**



**Its your choice**



## Acknowledgments

With thanks to:

- Melbourne Community Health Centre Leicester
- Julia Kew– Lead Health Facilitator NHS Leicester City
  - Donna Bishop– Self Advocate

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On behalf of the

**Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland (LNR)  
Learning Disability Cancer Screening Strategic  
Working Group**

## What is cervical screening



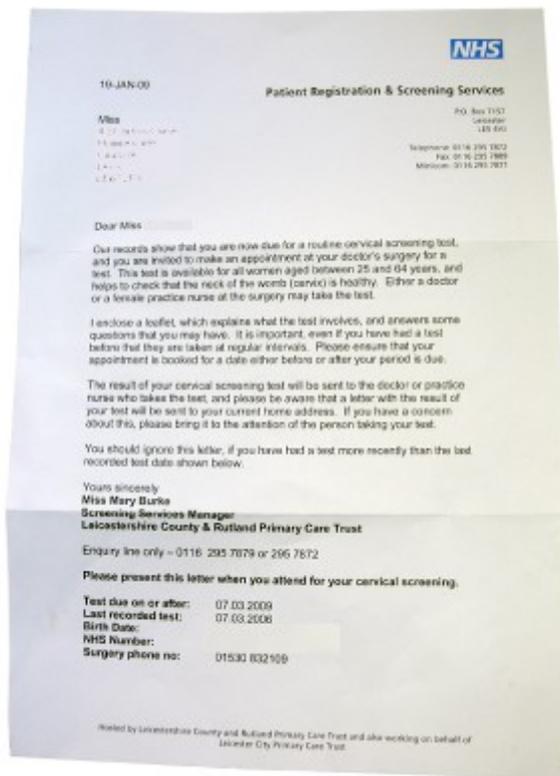
All women need to keep healthy down below.

Cervical screening is a test to check if the cells of your cervix are healthy.

Your cervix is inside your body at the top of your vagina.

If there are any unhealthy cells in your cervix they can be treated.

If unhealthy cells are not treated they may cause cancer.



## Note for carers

Please use this booklet to help the person you support to make a decision about cervical screening.

### What if the person I support does not have capacity to make a decision about screening?

Lack of capacity does not necessarily mean that the person can not or should not have the test. Any decisions for a person who lacks capacity must be made in their best interests.

If you need further advice or support regarding best interest decisions, please contact your local Learning Disability team.

### What if the person I support also has a physical disability?

If the doctors surgery is not able to accommodate their needs, you can ask them to refer the person you support to a clinic with the appropriate facilities.

All women between 25 and 64 years old are invited for a cervical screen test.

You will have a letter asking you to book an appointment at your doctors surgery.



If the results of your test are not OK, you might need the test done again or you might need a different test.

If you have not had a letter after 6 weeks phone your doctors surgery.



It is your choice to have the test or not.

Some things can make it more likely for cells in the cervix to become unhealthy like smoking, having sex with lots of people, having sex with someone who has had sex with lots of other people and if you have taken immunosuppressant drugs.

It is a good idea to have the test even if you have never had sex.

You can talk to your doctor about the risks and about the test.

## Booking your appointment



You or someone you trust will need to ring your doctors surgery to book an appointment.

## After your appointment



You will get a letter which will tell you about the results of your test.

You could talk to your friend, carer or supporter about your test results.

If the results are OK, you will be invited to have the test done again in 3 or 5 years.



You can then go home.

After the test you might notice a few drops of blood in your pants. Don't worry this is normal.



You can not have your test while you are on your period.

Do not have sex the day before or on the day of your test.



Talk to the receptionist if you have any extra needs like:

- A quiet waiting area
- An early appointment
- A late appointment
- A longer appointment
- A hoist



The doctor or nurse will put the cells from the small brush into a pot.

The pot will be sent away to be tested.



When the doctor or nurse has finished the test she will take the speculum out.

You can then put your pants back on.



You can ask for a female doctor or nurse to do your test.

## Before your appointment



You can arrange to take someone to the appointment with you.

You should choose someone you trust such as a friend, carer or supporter.



You can ask the doctor or nurse to stop at any time.



It is important that you relax so the doctor or nurse can do the test.

The test might be a bit uncomfortable.



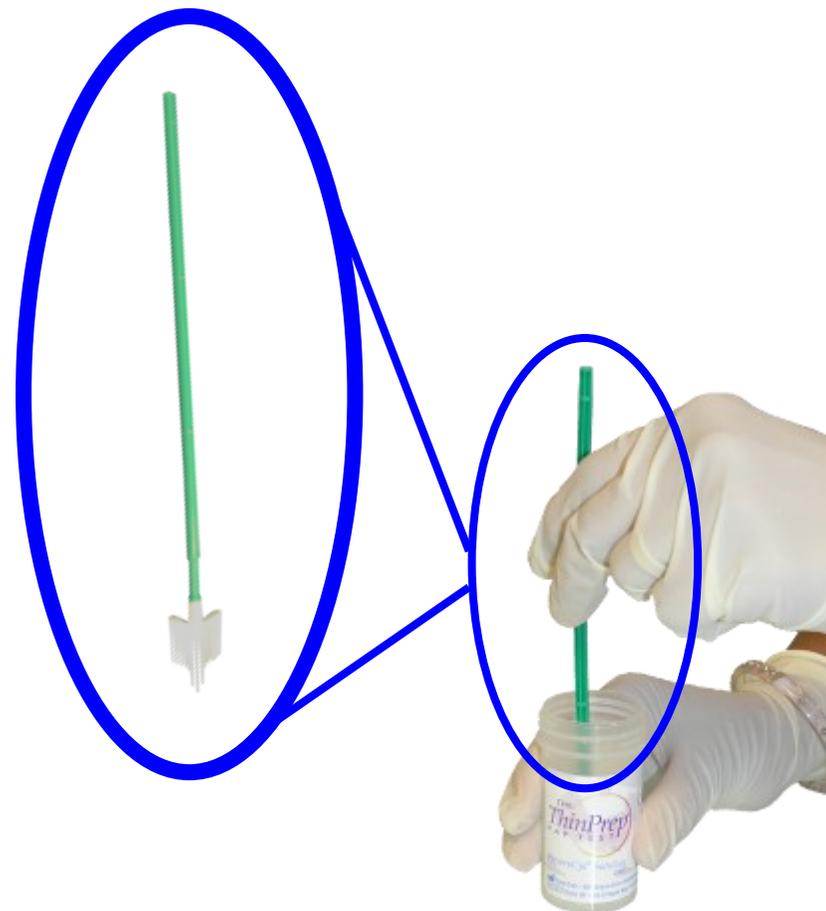
Talk to your friend, carer or supporter about anything that might help you to relax like

- Listening to music
- Relaxation exercises.

## At your appointment



Tell the receptionist you have arrived for your appointment.



The doctor or nurse will then use a small soft brush to take some cells from your cervix.



This is the speculum.

The speculum will hold your vagina open so the nurse can see your cervix.

The doctor or nurse will put the speculum into your vagina.



The receptionist will ask you to sit in the waiting room.



You will meet the doctor or nurse who will do your test.



The doctor or nurse will use a light to help her see better.



The doctor or nurse will ask you to lay on your back with your knees up.



The doctor or nurse will ask you some questions:

When was your last period?

Do you have bleeding in between your periods?

Do you have any bleeding after having sex?

Do you have discharge from your vagina?

What contraception do you use?

## Having your test



This is the equipment that the doctor or nurse will use to do the test.



The doctor or nurse will ask you to take off your pants and lie on the bed.

The doctor or nurse will give you a sheet to put over your legs.