

NOTE: We are currently unable to caption this specific video. We recognize that a transcript is not the most accessible option. All of our future videos will have captions.

00:00-00:30

Regular sexual health screening is important for people of all genders. For those who have a cervix, regular screening for cervical cancer is recommended in addition for screening for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections or STIs. With regular screening, cervical cancer is highly preventable and treatable. Unfortunately, current screening methods for cervical cancer it can be a difficult experience for a lot of people, especially for us on the transmasculine spectrum

00:31-00:45

I am using the term transmasculine to refer to an entire spectrum of gender identities. Of people who were assigned female at birth but identify as male, non-binary, or another gender identity.

00:46- 0:59

Currently, the most common method of screening for cervical cancer is the PAP test. During the PAP test, the provider collects cells from the cervix using a speculum and small brush. Those cells are looked at under a microscope to detect pre-cancerous changes.

1:00- 1:15

In this video, I am going to tell you about another, more comfortable option for cervical cancer screening. This is done by using a swab to self-collect cells from the frontal canal to test for high risk strains of human papillomavirus or HPV, which is the leading cause of cervical cancer.

1:16- 1:30

Since the sample is being collected from the frontal canal, the swab does not need to go in as far as during a pap test and no speculum is needed. It is important to know that the self swab option does not completely eliminate the possibility of needing a PAP test, but it can be a possible option for screening.

1:31-1:49

The next portion of this video will both describe and show how to collect cells from the frontal canal using the self swab. This information is based on a

recent study about sexual health screening options for transmasculine people. To learn more about the study visit transmaschealth.org

1:50-2:07

Before I show you how to collect the sample, let's look at the materials you will need. For the self-swab, you will need a polyester swab, this canister with fluid in it, and this sample bag to use when you are done.

2:08-2:21

Other option materials are a small mirror and some gloves. If you are in a doctor's office, your doctor should provide you with these materials. If you drop the swab at any point or knock over the canister, just throw that one away and use a new one. You want it to be sterile.

2:22-2:37

Now, let's get set up. Before you start, undress from the waist down and then wash your hands. Next, open the canister and place it on a stable surface, being careful not to spill the liquid inside.

2:38- 2:55

Then, tear open the swab. Note that the tip of the swab that you will use to collect the cells is opposite the pull tab you use to open the swab. Do not touch the tip of the swab or set it down on any surface. You want it to be sterile.

2:56- 3:13

Now you are ready to self-swab. The next portion will include illustrated and animated visual representations of bodies and body parts, including undetailed depictions of genitals. For those who may be uncomfortable with the images, the audio alone will provide an ample description of the procedure for self-swabbing.

3:14-3:17

You may opt to listen, but not watch starting now.

3:18-3:27 (ANIMATED VIDEO STARTS)

There are a lot of different body positions you can use in order to collect the swab. Some people find it easiest to put one leg up. Others find squatting most comfortable.

3:28-3:36

You can also try lying down to do the self-swab, like this. Some people find it helpful to use a handheld mirror during this process. Do whatever makes you feel most comfortable.

3:37-3:46

Next, measure out two inches of the swab. This is how much will need to be inserted. There's a two inch line on the written instructions you can compare it to.

3:47-3:57

Hold the swab between your thumb and forefinger. The most important thing about collecting a good sample is the angle at which you insert the swab. You need to aim in and slightly back towards your tail bone.

3:58-4:13

Now, being careful to avoid external skin, insert the swab two inches into the internal canal, until your thumb and forefinger hit skin. Rotate the swab in a circular motion for 10-30 seconds touching all walls of the internal canal to collect as many cells as possible.

4:14-4:24

It may help to count- 1 Mississippi, 2 Mississippi... or time yourself in some other way. Carefully remove the swab, doing your best to avoid touching external skin.

4:25-4:39 ANIMATED VIDEO ENDS, RETURN TO LIVE PERSON

After you remove the swab, place the swab in the canister and vigorously swish it in the fluid for about 10 seconds, being careful not to spill the liquid inside. You should also tap it against the walls of the canister to make sure you get the cells off the swab.

4:40-4:55

Remove the swab and discard. Place the cap back on the canister and firmly tighten it. Place the canister in the sample bag. And now you have finished your self swab.

4:56- 5:08

If you are at a doctor's office, hand your sample back to the provider or support staff. If you are at home, follow the instructions provided to mail your sample to the lab. Your provider will discuss with you when you should expect to receive your test results.

5:09-5:24

To recap, the self-swab is testing for the presence of high risk HPV, which may cause pre-cancerous changes to the cells in the cervix. If your sample comes back with a positive result of a high risk strain of HPV, you should discuss follow up procedures with your medical provider.

5:25-5:32

Depending on your individual circumstances, self-swabbing to screen for HPV may provide you with an alternative means to screen for cervical cancer.

5:33-5:39

As a reminder, self-swab collection does not completely eliminate the possibility of needing a PAP test.

5:40-5:50

To learn more, visit transmaschealth.org