



Human Papillomavirus (HPV)

HPV or human papillomavirus is the most common sexually transmitted viral disease in both men and women. Types of HPV can infect the skin in the genital area (genital warts), the vagina and the cervix. It is possible for a person to have HPV in their skin cells and pass it to another person even when no warts are seen.

How does a person get HPV?

The HPV virus is spread through skin contact with an infected person during vaginal, oral or anal sex.

How do I know if I have HPV?

The virus may be discovered if genital warts appear. The virus may also be found on a Pap test that isn't normal, an HPV lab test or by a biopsy.

How is HPV treated?

There are several ways to treat HPV. You and your doctor will decide the best treatment for you. Treatment can include:

- medicines
- cryosurgery

- electro surgery
- laser therapy

Cryosurgery freezes the infected tissue. Electro surgery destroys the infected tissue with electrical heat. Laser therapy uses laser to remove the infected tissue.

For the treatment to work and to keep from spreading HPV, you need to:

- Use condoms. This may not always prevent the spread of HPV because the virus may be on skin not covered by the condom.
- Tell your current and past sexual partners about the HPV so that they can be examined and treated.
- Have regular Pap tests. Talk to your doctor about how often you should have this test.
- Finish all treatments.
- **Stop smoking.** Cigarette smoking has been strongly linked with this virus.

For more information call:

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