

Cervical cancer screening frequency coverage

Wellpoint District of Columbia, Inc. | Medicaid

This communication outlines new coverage information regarding the frequency of cervical cancer screening for women at average risk and women younger than 21 years of age. Immunocompromised women and women with a history of prior abnormal results, precancerous cervical lesions, or cervical cancer are not included in this update.

Additional coverage information

Routine screening Pap testing will not be reimbursed for women younger than 21 years of age. In addition, effective April 1, 2023, routine screening frequency for women ages 21 to 65 will be reimbursed no more than once every three years. Reimbursement for routine Pap testing for women 66 and older with prior negative screening results will be denied.

Screening method and intervals

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force¹, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists², the American Cancer Society³, the American Society for Colposcopy and Cervical Pathology, and the American Society for Clinical Pathology all agree the optimal screening interval is no more than every three years.

Population of women	Recommended screening
Younger than 21 years of age	No screening
21 to 29 years of age	Cervical Pap test alone every three years
30 to 65 years of age	Human papillomavirus and cervical Pap co-testing every five years or cervical Pap test alone every three years
66 years of age and older	No screening is necessary after adequate negative prior screening results
Those who underwent total hysterectomy (with no residual cervix)	No screening is necessary

We encourage you to adopt this medical society and industry recommendation in the interest of improving enrollee quality and reducing harm from unnecessary follow-up.

¹ U.S. Preventive Services Task Force. *Cervical Cancer*. March 2012.

² American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. *Practice Bulletin Number 157: Screening for Cervical Cancer*. Obstet Gynecol. 2016 Jan; 127(1):e1-e20.

³ Saslow D, Solomon D, Lawson HW, et al. American Cancer Society, American Society for Colposcopy and Cervical Pathology, and American Society for Clinical Pathology screening guidelines for the prevention and early detection of cervical cancer. CA Cancer J Clin 2012; 62(3): 147-72.