

Cancer Screening Tip of the Month – February 2025

Toronto Central Regional Cancer Program, Cancer Screening eBulletin

Important Changes to the Ontario Cervical Screening Program (OCSP): HPV Testing - Starting March 3, 2025

On **March 3, 2025**, the human papillomavirus (HPV) test will replace cytology (papanicolaou smears) as the primary test for cervical screening in the OCSP. The **HPV screening test** detects oncogenic types of HPV. **Positive HPV screening tests** will automatically be sent for **reflex cytology** (normal, low-grade/high grade) and **partial genotyping** (HPV type 16; HPV types 18/45; or other high-risk HPV oncogenic types).

Important Process Changes:

- The new OCSP [cervical screening requisition](#) must be used to order program-related HPV and cytology tests (**do not use until March 3**).
- Please work with your laboratory partners (Lifelabs or Dynacare) to ensure that you collect program-related specimens using the ThinPrep® system. Any specimens collected using SurePath™ will be rejected. Please see the [How to Collect a Cervical Sample](#) tool for other tips on avoiding rejections.

Changes to the OCSP Cervical Screening and Colposcopy Recommendations:

- The age of cervical HPV screening initiation will be 25. Most people can stop cervical screening from ages 65 to 69. Refer to the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) for more information.
- HPV screening intervals are based on risk which is determined by the most recent screening result (HPV and reflex cytology results) and immune status.

Screening risk category	Screening results	Risk of cervical pre-cancer and cancer	Clinical next step
Average risk	• HPV-negative	0.12% to 0.41% (5-year risk)	Screen in 5 years
Immunocompromised	• HPV-negative	Unknown or variable	Screen in 3 years
Moderate risk	• HPV-positive (other high-risk types) with normal or low-grade cytology	1.3% to 3.7% (immediate risk)	Re-screen in 2 years
Elevated risk	• HPV-positive (types 16, 18/45) with high-grade cytology • HPV-positive (types 16, 18/45) with normal or low-grade cytology • HPV-positive (other high-risk types) with high-grade cytology	≥6% (immediate risk)	Refer to colposcopy

- HPV testing will be used in colposcopy to determine eligibility for discharge and the recommended interval for screening post-discharge from colposcopy.
- Further details and the evidence to support these changes are available in the [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

Resources and Upcoming Webinars:

- All resources to support providers with the upcoming change are available on the [HPV Testing in Ontario: Implementation Resource Hub](#).
- The Toronto Central Regional Cancer Program will offer a webinar for primary care providers on **March 6th at 6:00 – 7:30 pm**. For more information and to register click [here](#).

Click [here](#) to view the previous Cancer Screening Tip of the Month eBulletins.

If you have any questions or if you would like to receive the Cancer Screening Tip of the Month please email the Toronto Central Regional Cancer Program, Cancer Screening team: infoTCRCP@sunnybrook.ca