

# JANUARY Health Topic

## Cervical Cancer



INSTITUTE FOR  
**WOMEN'S HEALTH**  
RESEARCH™  
AT NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

Cervical cancer is one of the most common gynecological cancers, with more than 11,000 women in the United States diagnosed each year. The human papillomavirus (HPV) plays a role in causing cervical cancer by causing cancerous growth of cells on the uterus. In most women, the immune system is able to fight off the virus, but for some the virus may survive for years, eventually leading to cancerous cells.

As with all cancers, early detection is key, and routine Pap test screening has greatly reduced the death rate from cervical cancer. Women with cervical cancer typically remain asymptomatic until late stages, when they may experience vaginal bleeding, pelvic pain, or pain during intercourse. Treatment for cervical cancer depends on the severity and depth of the cancer and ranges from removal of the affected cells by cone biopsy, laser surgery, or loop electrosurgical excision procedure (LEEP), to hysterectomy and chemotherapy in more severe cases.

### Resources at Northwestern for Cervical Cancer

Physicians and health care providers at Northwestern University's Prentice Women's Hospital provide diagnosis and treatment for women with cervical cancer and other gynecologic cancers. The hospital also offers treatment for other gynecologic conditions such as abnormal pap smears, cervical dysplasia, and ovarian cysts and focuses on early detection of gynecologic cancers. Patients at Prentice Women's Hospital are provided with innovative treatments such as chemotherapy, laser surgery, radio-

therapy, reconstructive surgery and robotic and minimally invasive surgery as part of their comprehensive treatment plan. *For appointments, call (877) 926-4664.*

### Northwestern Physicians/ Researchers specializing in Cervical Cancer Treatment

The Division of Gynecologic Oncology at Northwestern's Feinberg School of Medicine is comprised of health care professionals in a multidisciplinary effort to provide excellence in cancer treatment and research. Physicians specializing in treatment of invasive gynecologic cancers include Drs. Julian Schink, John Lurrain, Barbara Buttin, Patrick Lowe, and Diljeet Singh. Research interests of the department include cancer cell invasion and metastasis, and human papillomavirus carcinogenesis. Patients also have access to numerous clinical trials as part of their treatment. *Additional patient information is available by calling (312) 472-4684.*

Click to see physician profiles and clinic information:

- <http://www.nmff.org/findPhysician/physearch.asp>
- <http://www.nmff.org/ClinicalMedical/topic.asp?id=198>

### IWHR Highlighted Researcher

Dr. Diljeet Singh, MD, DrPH is an Assistant Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Northwestern's Feinberg School of Medicine, and a Gynecologic Oncologist at the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center. She completed her medical degree at Northwestern University, and a Master

of Public Health at Harvard University. After completing her residency at Johns Hopkins Hospital and a fellowship at MD Anderson Cancer Center, she received a Doctoral degree at the University of Texas School of Public Health. Dr. Singh's research interests include prevention and early detection of gynecologic cancers such as cervical cancer. Most recently she is working on a clinical trial of cervical pre-cancers and cancer among HIV positive genocidal rape survivors in Rwanda. Dr. Singh is also a co-director of the Northwestern Ovarian Cancer Early Detection and Prevention Program and was recently awarded the Northwestern Medical Faculty Foundation Physician Clinical Service Excellence Award.

### Useful Links and Resources:

- <http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/types/cervical>
- <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/cervicalcancer.html>
- <http://www.nccc-online.org/index.html>

### Upcoming Conferences/Symposiums/Events:

Cancer Connection Days at Northwestern, January 14, 2009. *Spotlight: Rare Cancers and cancer in minority populations*

- <http://www.cancer.northwestern.edu/events/index.cfm>

Girlfriends Night Out at Northwestern, January 29, 2009

- <http://www.cancer.northwestern.edu/girlfriends/index.cfm>

*Federal, state, and local organizations identify a number of health issues each month to bring to national attention. The Institute will focus on one of these topics each month.*

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