

# CERVICAL CANCER SCREENING IN NSW

## Overview

In 2005, 208 NSW women were diagnosed with cervical cancer. Cervical cancer was the 15th most common cause of cancer mortality in NSW women, accounting for 75 deaths, compared with 100 deaths in 1991.

Cervical screening, as a means of early detection of cervical cancer, has been a very successful public health program. It is estimated to be over 90% effective in preventing cases of cervical cancer.

## Participation rates in NSW

There were a total of 681,306 Pap tests registered with the NSW Pap Test Register (PTR) in 2005. Of these, 641,932 Pap tests were in women aged 20–69 years.

The overall biennial cervical screening rate for 2004–05 was 58% for the target 20–69 year age group.

In the five-year period from 1 January 2001 to 31 December 2005, 1,578,662 women aged 20–69 years were screened at least once. This constitutes 84.5% of the total women in the target age group.

## Screening results

In 2005:

- NSW had a significantly lower rate of technically unsatisfactory Pap tests (2.2%), compared with the maximum allowable level (up to 5%).
- About 5.9% of Pap tests were reported as showing some type of abnormality.
- Of these, 8.3 per 1000 women had high-grade abnormalities, confirmed on biopsy, compared to 6.2 per 1000 in 1997.
- Changes of human papilloma virus (HPV) showed in 2.2% of Pap tests. HPV is the major risk factor for cervical cancer.

## Incidence and mortality

The age-standardised incidence rate for 2005 was six per 100,000 women.

Incidence rates decreased by 59% between 1972 and 2005, while mortality rates fell by 70%.

Most women who develop cervical cancer in NSW today are those who have either never had a Pap test, or have not had one for four years or more.

Most of the decline in the incidence of cervical cancer is evident over the past 10 years, with a fall of 42%. This coincides with the establishment of the National Cervical Screening Program.

## More information

Find out more information about the Cervical Screening Program in NSW at: [www.csp.nsw.gov.au](http://www.csp.nsw.gov.au)

Download the full *Cervical Cancer Screening in NSW: Annual Statistical Report* at: [www.cancerinstitute.org.au](http://www.cancerinstitute.org.au)