Cervical cancer can be prevented by vaccination and screening. The human papillomavirus (HPV) causes nearly all cases of cervical cancer and some other cancers that affect both women and men. HPV vaccine protects against these cancers.

There are usually no signs or symptoms of early cervical cancer. Pap test checks for cells that are not normal and might lead to cancer. HPV test checks for the presence of HPV.

Vaccination and Screening recommendations:

- Begin HPV vaccine series for girls and boys aged 9-26.
- Follow screening guidelines even if you get the vaccine.
- Begin Pap test and get one every 3 years.
- Get a Pap test every 3 years or simultaneous Pap and HPV test every 5 years.

To learn more about preventing cervical cancer with the right test at the right time, talk with your doctor or visit http://tinyurl.com/CW-CervicalCancer for information from Choosing Wisely, an initiative of the ABIM Foundation.

Cervical cancer screening usually doesn't help lower risk women:

- Younger than 21
- Older than 65
- With previous normal screenings
- They have had a complete hysterectomy

Cervical cancer screening can cause a backlog in the treatment of other cancers. Cervical cancer used to be the leading cause of cancer death for women in the United States. However, in the past 40 years, the number of cases and the number of deaths from cervical cancer have decreased significantly. This decline largely is the result of many women getting regular Pap tests, which can find cervical precancer before it turns into cancer.