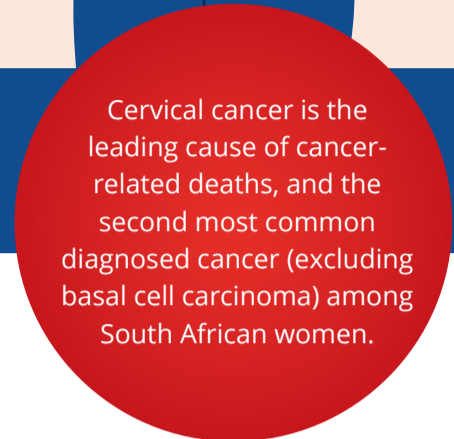


CERVICAL CANCER AWARENESS

Protect your health through early detection

Cervical cancer is one of the most preventable cancers, yet it remains a serious threat to women, especially when it goes undetected.






Cervical cancer is the leading cause of cancer-related deaths, and the second most common diagnosed cancer (excluding basal cell carcinoma) among South African women.

WHY IS SCREENING IMPORTANT?

Cervical cancer develops slowly and is often caused by the Human Papillomavirus (HPV), a common virus spread through sexual contact. Regular pap smears and HPV testing can detect early changes in the cervix before they become cancerous. Early detection means early treatment, often before any symptoms appear, which dramatically improves outcomes and saves lives.

MBMED COVERS:

-  **Two doses of the HPV vaccine per female beneficiary between 9 and 14 years and three doses per beneficiary between 15 and 26 years.**
-  **One HPV PCR screening test every 5 years per female beneficiary aged 25 - 65.**
-  **One pap smear or liquid-based cytology test per adult female beneficiary per year.**

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF CERVICAL CANCER?

Cervical cancer may not cause symptoms in its early stages. When it does, common signs include:

- Unusual vaginal bleeding (especially after sex, between periods or after menopause)
- Persistent pelvic pain
- Pain during intercourse
- Unusual vaginal discharge

These symptoms are not always signs of cancer, but they should never be ignored.

WHO'S AT RISK FOR CERVICAL CANCER?



Women aged 21 and older, especially those between 30 and 65



Those with a history of HPV infection



Individuals with weakened immune systems (e.g. HIV-positive women)



Women who smoke



Women who have not had regular pap smears

HOW IS CERVICAL CANCER TREATED?

Treatment depends on how early the cancer is diagnosed and may include:

- Surgery to remove cancerous tissue
- Radiation therapy
- Chemotherapy
- A combination of these approaches

When found early, treatment is highly effective.

Treatment, medication, materials used in radiotherapy and chemotherapy, including consultations and visits, specialised and biological

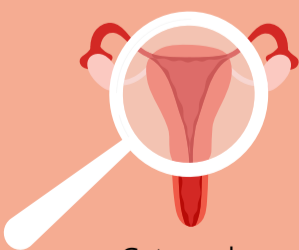
drugs are covered at the lower of the cost or Scheme rate. There is a sub-limit of R326 000 per family per year for oncology specialised drugs. Authorisation is needed from Medscheme Oncology Management.

Members are encouraged to register on the **Oncology Management Programme** as soon as possible after a cancer diagnosis. The Scheme's oncology benefits are subject to pre-authorisation and case management.

 **0860 100 572**

 **cancerinfo@medscheme.co.za**

TAKE ACTION



Get regular pap smears.



Take advantage of the HPV vaccination and screening, which can prevent most types of cervical cancer.



Don't delay follow-ups or ignore symptoms.

NEED HELP? Contact your Scheme for any benefit-related queries you may have.

 **0860 002 109** |  **mbmed@medscheme.co.za**