

# REFLEX HPV TESTING

## Information for Physicians

### What is the purpose of reflex HPV testing?

The purpose of reflex HPV testing is to detect the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) in a Pap test sample and to help decide what follow up is needed for women in specific age groups with a low grade Pap test result (ASC-US or LSIL).

### Who is eligible for a reflex HPV test?

The lab will automatically perform reflex HPV testing on women  $\geq 30$  years whose Pap test result is ASC-US and for women  $\geq 50$  years whose Pap test result is LSIL. (See excerpt from Toward Optimized Practice Clinical Practice Guideline below.)

### What if my patient's reflex HPV result is positive?

**Referral to a colposcopist** is recommended for women with a Pap result of ASC-US who are  $\geq 30$  years of age or LSIL who are  $\geq 50$  years of age **and a positive reflex HPV result**. These patients are classified as high risk and require follow-up care to determine if treatment is required.

### What if my patient's reflex HPV result is negative?

**Routine screening** in accordance with the Clinical Practice Guideline (CPG) is recommended for women with a Pap result of ASC-US who are  $\geq 30$  years of age or LSIL who are  $\geq 50$  years of age **and a negative reflex HPV result**. The risk of cervical cancer in the next 3 years for this population is approximately the same as women who have a normal Pap test result.

### What if my patient has had the HPV vaccine?

The HPV vaccine does not protect against all HPV strains that cause cervical cancer. Even if your patient has had the HPV vaccine they should continue to screen in accordance with the CPG recommendations.

### Will my patient's Pap test and HPV result be sent in the mail?

The Alberta Cervical Cancer Screening Program (ACCSP) is coordinated by Alberta Health Services in partnership with healthcare providers. The ACCSP mails Pap test results to women across Alberta. These letters do not say whether HPV testing was done, but they do say whether follow-up care is needed based on the Pap test result in combination with the reflex HPV test. To learn more about the ACCSP and how the program works please call 1-866-727-3926 or visit [www.screeningforlife.ca/cervical](http://www.screeningforlife.ca/cervical).

### How can I learn more about HPV and how to help protect my patients?

To obtain more resources for your patients contact Alberta Health Services Screening Programs at 1-866-727-3926 or visit the Healthcare Providers page on [www.screeningforlife.ca](http://www.screeningforlife.ca)



### Excerpt from Toward Optimized Practice Clinical Practice Guideline<sup>1</sup>

Pap Test Result	Recommended Management
Atypical squamous cells of undetermined significance (ASC-US)	<b>Women <math>\geq 30</math> years</b> ( <i>The lab will automatically perform reflex HPV testing</i> )
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HPV Negative → return to routine screening as if cytology was negative</li> <li>• HPV Positive → refer for colposcopy</li> <li>• HPV Indeterminate → manage as per women 21-29 years</li> </ul>
Low-grade squamous intraepithelial lesion (LSIL)	<b>Women <math>\geq 50</math> years</b> ( <i>The lab will automatically perform reflex HPV testing</i> )
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HPV Negative → return to routine screening as if cytology was negative</li> <li>• HPV Positive → refer for colposcopy</li> <li>• HPV Indeterminate → manage as per women 21-49 years</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Full guideline available at [www.screeningforlife.ca/healthcareproviders/cervical-cancer-resources](http://www.screeningforlife.ca/healthcareproviders/cervical-cancer-resources)