

Jackson County Department of Public Health

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JCDPH OFFERS PREVENTION OPTIONS FOR CERVICAL CANCER

The National Cervical Cancer Coalition and the Jackson County Department of Public Health urge women to talk with their healthcare provider about cervical health.

Each year in the US nearly 13,000 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer and more than 4,000 die as a result. The disease is the fourth most common type of cancer but, because it develops over time, it is also one of the most preventable types of cancer.

Nursing Supervisor, Carla Morgan, says that preventing this cancer starts with a conversation. "It is important that patients and providers feel comfortable talking about sexual health, including cervical cancer prevention. These conversations are often rushed through or avoided altogether. When it comes to sexual and reproductive health, we should be comfortable in our own skin and have the confidence to seek the care and support we need."

Two prevention tools that women can take advantage of include Pap tests and cervical cancer vaccines. A Pap test can find cell changes in the cervix caused by HPV (the virus that can cause cervical cancer). The Jackson County Department of Public Health offers Pap tests to women through the Family Planning Program per AGOG guidelines. Additionally, the Health Department provides cervical cancer vaccination, or HPV vaccination. This vaccine is recommended for routine vaccination for males and females at age 11 or 12 years to assist in developing a stronger immune response. It can also be given later in life to those who were not adequately vaccinated previously.

For more information, call the Health Department at 828-586-8994. To see if you are eligible for the Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCCP), a program that provides free or low-cost breast and cervical cancer screenings and follow-up to eligible women, call Rebecca Williamson at 828-587-8213.

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