

HPV early detection test created

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U.S. scientists have developed a technology that can detect a single molecule of the virus associated with female cervical cancer.

Iowa State University Professor Edward Yeung and colleagues said their achievement represents a significant improvement over the current test for the human papillomavirus that requires 10 to 50 virus molecules for detection.

"We are always interested in detecting smaller and smaller amounts of material at lower and lower concentrations," Yeung said. "Detecting lower levels means earlier diagnosis."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports the human papillomavirus is one of the most common sexually transmitted infections in the United States, infecting about 6.2 million Americans every year.

Yeung said single molecule detection of the virus could help women and families decide to be vaccinated. He said vaccines administered after such early detection could still have time to stop the virus.

The discovery by Yeung, doctoral student Jiangwei Li, and former doctoral students Ji-Young Lee appears in the journal *Analytical Chemistry*.

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