

Screening, HPV vaccine can prevent cervical cancer: FDA

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(HealthDay)—Women can reduce their risk of cervical cancer through

vaccination and screening, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration says.

In 2016, an estimated 13,000 women in the United States were diagnosed with [cervical cancer](#) and more than 4,100 died from the disease, according to the U.S. National Cancer Institute.

The FDA wants to make women aware of how to protect themselves from cervical cancer, which is caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV).

An FDA-approved vaccine called Gardasil 9 protects against 9 HPV types and can prevent about 90 percent of cervical, vulvar, vaginal and anal cancer cancers, and also protects against genital warts. The vaccine is approved for use in females and males aged 9 to 26.

Gardasil 9 is not a treatment for HPV disease or cervical cancer, noted Marion Gruber, director of the FDA's Office of Vaccines Research and Review.

"Women, including those who have been vaccinated, should continue to get Pap tests because they are essential to detect cervical cancer and precancerous changes," she said in an FDA news release.

A Pap test (or smear) and HPV test are two ways to spot cervical cancer. If abnormalities are detected on a Pap smear, follow-up testing may include another Pap smear, a HPV test and testing tissue via biopsy from the cervix.

Cervical cancer often causes no pain, which means a woman can have cervical cancer and not know it. That makes testing for the disease that much more important. The earlier the cancer is detected, the easier it is to treat, the FDA said.

More information: The U.S. National Cancer Institute has more on [cervical cancer](#).

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