



News from the Office of
ERIE COUNTY EXECUTIVE MARK POLONCARZ

NEWS RELEASE

Health Commissioner Dr. Gale Burstein

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CONTACT: JoAnne Paxon/ JoAnne.Paxon@erie.gov
Phone: (716)858-4941/ Mobile: (716) 364-3028

January is National Cervical Cancer Awareness Month

Vaccination and Early Detection Saves Lives

ERIE COUNTY, NY— The Erie County Department of Health (“ECDOH”) supports National Cervical Cancer Awareness Month, a month designated to shining a spotlight on a wide range of cervical health issues, including human papillomavirus (HPV) and cervical cancer. While cervical cancer is highly preventable due to the availability of screening tests and vaccines to prevent HPV, most women diagnosed with cervical cancer in the U.S. have either never had a Pap test, or have not had a Pap test in the last 5 years.

“When cervical cancer is found early, it is highly treatable and associated with long survival and good quality of life,” **said Erie County Health Commissioner Dr. Gale Burstein.** “Most cervical cancer is caused by HPV, a very common sexually transmitted infection that can also cause genital warts. Vaccines protect against the HPV types that most often cause cervical, vaginal, vulvar, and throat cancers. Through the Erie County Cancer Services Program, we have the ability to provide cervical cancer screening for uninsured or underinsured residents. I urge women to contact us as soon as possible to schedule an appointment.”

HPV vaccine is highly effective in preventing HPV infections, which cause about 70 percent of cervical and anal cancers and about 60 percent of throat cancers. Widespread vaccination has the potential to reduce cervical cancer deaths around the world by as much as two-thirds, if all women were to get the vaccine. Routine HPV vaccination is recommended for girls and boys at age 11 or 12 years; vaccination also is recommended for females through age 26 years and for males through age 21 years who have not been vaccinated previously. Vaccination can also reduce the need for medical care, biopsies, and invasive procedures associated with follow-up from abnormal Pap tests, thus helping to reduce health care costs and anxieties related to abnormal Pap tests and follow-up procedures.

Through its Cancer Services Program, ECDOH provides cancer screening, diagnostic, treatment, and support services for uninsured and underinsured individuals aged 40 and over for breast, cervical and colo-rectal cancer. The ECDOH Cancer Services Program can determine eligibility for services, assist with scheduling screening examinations, and provide information at no cost.

Individuals can contact the Cancer Screening Program at (716) 886-9201, or utilize the Cancer Services Program website, www.cspwny.org.

ECDOH recommends that you discuss vaccinations with and receive them from your primary care provider. For more information on Cervical Cancer Screening and HPV Vaccine:

Erie County Department of Health

<http://www2.erie.gov/health/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/gynecologic/basic_info/prevention.htm

<http://www.cdc.gov/std/hpv/stdfact-hpv-vaccine-young-women.htm>

The American Cancer Society, visit:

<http://www.cancer.org/>