

# NORTHEAST MEDICAL ROUNDS

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## What is HPV?

NorthEast Medical Center [www.northeastmedical.org](http://www.northeastmedical.org) is a regional 457-bed, not-for-profit medical center, with a reputation for excellence built on advanced technology, medical staff talent, quality, and compassionate care. For the third year in a row, Solucient, [www.solucient.com](http://www.solucient.com) a leading healthcare information company, has named NorthEast Medical Center to its 100 Top Hospitals® list under the category of "Teaching Hospitals". HealthGrades, [www.healthgrades.com](http://www.healthgrades.com) a leading healthcare information company has rated NorthEast Medical Center as best in the Charlotte, Hickory, Concord and Gastonia region for overall cardiovascular care over the past four years. In addition, HealthGrades has named NEMC as the best-rated hospital in the region for overall orthopedics, knee replacement surgery and joint replacement surgery.

The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) has proclaimed NorthEast Medical Center as the 58th facility in the U.S. and Europe to officially achieve "Magnet Hospital" status based on its sound foundation of academic and experiential knowledge. NorthEast Medical Center's Mammography, MRI and Ultrasound departments are fully accredited imaging facilities, meeting the high achievement and performance standards established by the American College of Radiology. For more information call ASK FIRST, a service of NorthEast, at 1-800-575-1275, or 704-783-1275. Based in Concord, North Carolina, NorthEast Medical Center has 4100 employees serving in more than 26 facilities located throughout the region.



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[www.northeastmedical.org](http://www.northeastmedical.org)



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## What is HPV?

HPV stands for Human Papilloma Virus. HPV is now the most common sexually transmitted disease. This virus can cause changes to the cells of the cervix sometimes leading to cervical cancer. Cervical cancer is second only to breast cancer as the leading cause of cancer deaths in women worldwide. There are over 100 strains of HPV. Some of the HPV strains have more effect on the cells of the cervix than others. Several strains of HPV can cause genital warts, also known as condyloma, on the female or male genitalia. Fortunately, pelvic examinations and Pap tests (also known as Pap Smears) can detect most pre-cancerous conditions. During the routine pelvic examination, a sampling is taken of the cells of the cervix and sent to a cytopathologist for microscopic evaluation. Abnormal Pap smear results are followed by either a repeat Pap smear or a colposcopic examination depending on the specific results of the examination. A colposcope is a microscope used to magnify the cells of the cervix. Biopsies may be obtained during colposcopic examination to further evaluate any changes of the cervix.

Cervical cancer often has no symptoms. This is especially true in the early stages of disease, when the cancer is most treatable. Therefore, it is extremely important to have routine Pap screening to detect the early, pre-cancerous changes. The American Cancer Society recommends that all women have a Pap smear starting at age 18 or whenever they become sexually active. Pap smears are then performed annually initially and can sometimes be increased to every 2 to 3 years depending on age and risk factors.

Studies have revealed that approximately 6 million American women are infected with HPV. Having sexual intercourse at an early age or having multiple sexual partners increase the risk of developing HPV as well as other sexually transmitted diseases. Women who smoke are at least twice as likely as women who do not smoke to develop cervical cancer.

The future of HPV and cervical cancer screening may change with the emergence of a new HPV vaccine. In a recent study the vaccine was 92% effective in preventing new HPV-16 and HPV-18 and 100% effective against persistent HPV-16 and HPV-18 infections. HPV-16 and HPV-18 are strains of the human papilloma virus that are linked to the

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majority of cervical cancers. This vaccine will probably be used to vaccinate children and adolescents in the near future.

The importance of annual Pap screening examinations cannot be overstated. The early detection of HPV and changes noted on Pap screening is crucial in the prevention and cure of cervical cancer. Contact your Primary Care Provider or Gynecologist to schedule an examination.