

Reviewing your cervical screening history

Information for women diagnosed with cervical cancer

Updated February 2024



**Cervical
Screening**

Being told you have cervical cancer can be a shock. You may feel anxious and uncertain about what will happen next. You may also be wondering why you have cervical cancer, especially if you have had screening tests (often called smear tests) in the past.



Cervical screening and cancer

Cervical screening reduces the risk of developing cervical cancer. Regular screening is the best way to find changes to the cervix early on. But, like other screening tests, it is not perfect. Screening cannot identify every single case of cancer or pre-cancer.



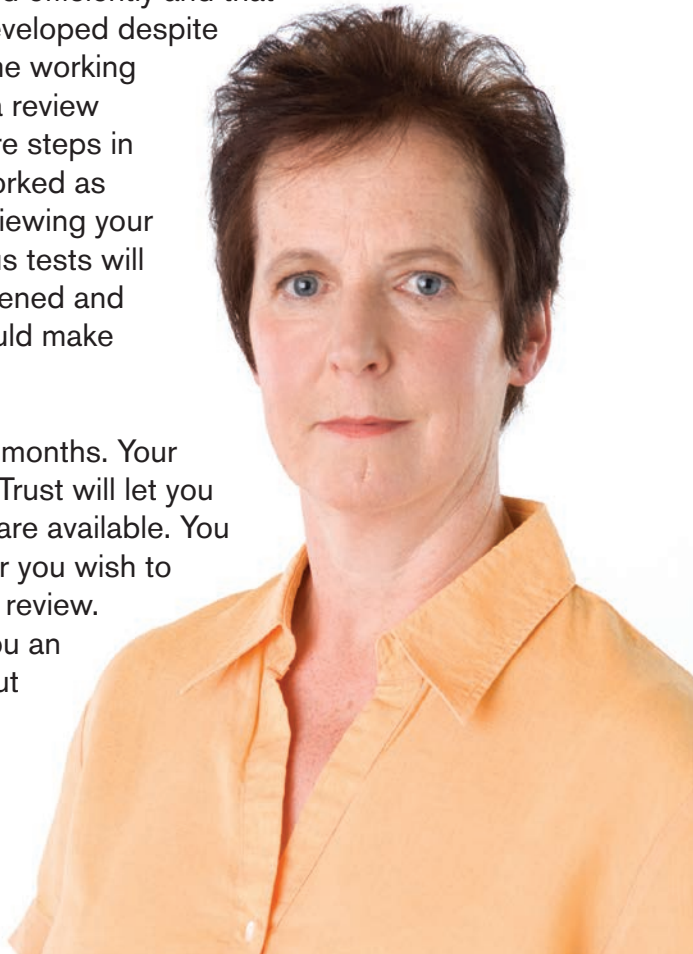


Reviewing your previous screening history

Reviews are where we look into what has happened in the past. They are an important and routine part of every high-quality screening programme. Reviews can show us how well the screening programme is working and where improvement could be made.

The cervical screening process involves many different steps which aim to find and treat abnormal cells on the cervix, to prevent cervical cancer from developing. In most cases, a review will show that all steps have been followed efficiently and that a cervical cancer has developed despite the screening programme working properly. Occasionally, a review may find that one or more steps in the process have not worked as well as they should. Reviewing your case history and previous tests will help find what has happened and may show where we could make improvements.

A review takes up to six months. Your Health and Social Care Trust will let you know once the findings are available. You can then decide whether you wish to know the findings of the review. Your doctor may offer you an appointment to talk about the review findings.





More information

If you have any more questions about your referral, treatment or the review process, please speak to your **Clinical Nurse Specialist**.

There are some helpful answers to **frequently asked questions** about the review of cervical cancers on the PHA website:

pha.site/cervical-review-FAQs

For further information and support:

- visit **Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust** website at **www.jostrust.org.uk** or phone **0808 802 8000**
- visit the **Be Cancer Aware** website at **www.becancerawareni.info/resources/links**



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