

January is Cervical Cancer Awareness Month

All women are at risk for cervical cancer. It occurs most often in women over age 30.¹ According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), approximately 12,845 women in the United States are diagnosed with cervical cancer each year. In Florida, there were 949 new cases and 353 deaths from cervical cancer in 2015 (Florida Cancer Data System).² Most cases of cervical cancer occur in women who have never received a Pap test screening or who have not been screened in the past five years.³ The CDC recommends talking to your doctor about when a Pap test is most appropriate for you. Tests for cancer-causing strains of human papilloma virus (HPV) support early diagnosis of cervical cancer.³ When found early, it is highly treatable and associated with long survival and good quality of life.

Since the HPV vaccine was introduced in 2006, CDC reports that the rates of HPV strains related to genital warts and some cancers have decreased 56 percent among American teen girls. Nearly all cervical cancers are caused by HPV.⁴ The two or three dose HPV vaccination series can help prevent multiple cancers, including cervical cancer and cancer of the mouth and throat.⁴ The Advisory Committee for Immunization Practices recommends vaccinating boys and girls, ages 11 to 12 years old. The HPV vaccine may be given starting at 9 years of age and through the age of 26 for those who did not get any or all of the shots when they were younger.⁵ The new Gardasil HPV 9 vaccine offers protection from more types of HPV.⁵ Those males and females who have completed a HPV vaccination series do not need vaccination with the new vaccine.⁵ HPV 9 may be used to complete a series started with one of the other HPV vaccines.⁵ To learn more about HPV vaccination series or Pap testing call your local county health department or visit the [Florida Department of Health's website](#).

The [Florida Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program](#) offers free or low cost Pap tests to women who are:

- ages 50-64, and
- at or below 200% the federal poverty level, and
- underinsured or uninsured.

According to the CDC, to reduce risk or prevent cervical cancer:²

- Get the HPV vaccine
- Women between 21 and 65 years old should see their doctor regularly for a Pap test
- Do not smoke
- Limit the number of sexual partners

Parents and young adults are encouraged to visit this site at [Diseases and the Vaccines that Prevent Them](#) to learn more about vaccine-preventable diseases and recommendations. Medical providers are encouraged to visit the CDC's Preteen and Teen Vaccines website which includes useful information and patient handouts: [HPV Vaccine is Cancer Prevention](#)

For more information on cervical cancer, go to <https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/cervical/>.

State Update

Florida's 2019 legislative session will convene Friday, March 1, 2019 at 12 p.m. and will continue for 60 days, adjourning on May 3, 2019. For updates on the senate bills being filed visit: [Florida Senate](#).

Cancer Survivor Tips

Holidays and social events can pose unique communication challenges for cancer survivors. The [National Cancer Institute](#) (NCI) has compiled recommendations on how to relate to family, friends and coworkers after a diagnosis. As they state, "having cancer can change relationships with the people in your life. It's normal to notice changes in the way you relate to family, friends, and other people that you are around every day - and the way they relate to you."⁶ A featured article titled [When a Grandparent has Cancer](#) has special considerations for helping a child cope with a grandparent's cancer. Resources have also been developed on how to effectively communicate with your health care team. Both [NCI](#) and [LiveSTRONG](#) have information for survivors on how to learn more about their diagnosis and treatment process. CancerCare has a simple and concise [factsheet](#) with specific questions and tips to make the most of health visits. Coping with Cancer has a great article on [communicating with your doctor](#). Although the article addresses issues specific to ovarian cancer, many of these concepts are universal.

Some cancer survivors can experience physical limitations with their speech as a result of treatment. Coping with Cancer has included recommendations on [reducing complications from head and neck cancers](#), which include cancers from HPV.

If a cancer survivor would like additional help with communicating, they can consider joining a support group such as those with [LiveSTRONG website](#) and [CancerCare](#) through 1-800-813-HOPE (4673).

Funding Opportunities

National Institutes of Health released funding opportunity announcements (FOAs) for a variety of cancer related research projects:

- **Accelerating Colorectal Cancer Screening and follow-up through Implementation Science (ACCSIS, Second Wave) (UG3/UH3 Clinical Trial Required)** is to promote research in colorectal cancer (CRC) screening, follow-up, and referral-to-care in regions of the United States (U.S.) where screening rates are below national standards. The goal is to develop an evidence-based multilevel intervention that increase rates of CRC screening, follow-up, and referral-to-care, and best practices to reduce the burden of colorectal cancer on the U.S. population. ([RFA-CA-19-018](#))

Small Steps to Living Healthy



Healthiest Weight Florida encourages Floridians to ring in the new year by implementing best practices relating to health equity. Achieving health equity requires valuing everyone equally with focused and ongoing societal efforts to address avoidable inequalities, historical and contemporary injustices, and the elimination of health and health care disparities.⁷ To ensure Floridians in all communities have opportunities to achieve healthier outcomes, the State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) Steering Committee has chosen health equity as one of eight priority areas, which will guide strategic health interventions for the next five years.

Many organizations and practitioners have often confused the terms health equity and health equality. The goal of equality is to promote fairness, but it can only work if everyone starts from the same place and needs the same things. Realistically, people with chronic diseases, physical disabilities, and people who live in communities where health care services are limited, will need different things to achieve and maintain their overall level of wellness.⁷ Health equity considers those differences and advocates for removing the underlying causes of health disparities.

Healthcare professionals can help to close barriers for health equity in their practice setting. Organizations are encouraged to integrate health equity by establishing equitable practices on hiring decisions, resource distribution, and staff training. It is important to consider writing health equity goals into the organization's critical documents (e.g., Mission Statements, Strategic Plans). [Community health assessments](#) can shed light on various areas which could contribute to achieving health equity in your community. From there, hospitals and health care organizations can forge partnerships with schools and key stakeholders to facilitate child access to healthy, and nutritious food.⁸ [A Practitioner's Guide for Advancing Health Equity](#) has strategies that organizations can implement to achieve health equity, such as, empowering staff to identify and contribute to health equity-related improvements and review the policies for any potential modifications.⁸

The [Social Determinants of Health](#) play a key factor in achieving health equity. Barriers to healthcare services include the high cost of care, inadequate insurance coverage, unavailability of services in a community and lack of culturally-competent care.⁹ They are often linked to socioeconomic status, education level, age, sex, disability, geographical location, race and ethnicity.⁹ Experts are predicting that if current trends continue, half of all Americans will be obese by 2030.¹⁰ Healthy People 2020 highlights the importance of addressing the social determinants of health by reflecting five key areas such as Economic, Stability, Education, Social and Community Context, Health and Health Care, and Neighborhood and Built Environment.¹⁰

Be sure to visit the [Florida Department of Health](#) website for more information about health equity and to learn more about the Bureau of Chronic Disease Prevention's initiatives.

Cancer in the News



General Cancer Related Articles

[A bacterial protein is found to promote cancer](#) – Science Daily, Dec. 4, 2018

[New tool to find and fight most dangerous types of lymphoma](#) – Science Daily, Dec. 3, 2018

Prevention Related Articles

[Study discovers 40 new genetic variants associated with colorectal cancer risk](#) - Science Daily, Dec. 3, 2018

[Genomic Test Helps Identify Thyroid Nodules That Don't Require Surgery](#) – Science Daily, Dec. 3, 2018

Access to Care Related Articles

[Global trial shows CAR T therapy can lead to durable remissions in non-Hodgkin's lymphoma](#) – Science Daily, Dec. 1, 2018

Survivorship Related Articles

[New two-year data show 39 percent of non-Hodgkin lymphoma patients treated with CAR T-cell therapy remain in remission](#) – Science Daily, Dec. 3, 2018

Events



The **National Comprehensive Cancer Network's (NCCN) Continuing Education Program** seeks to improve patient outcomes in oncology by educating clinicians on the application of evidence-based medicine. Their accredited educational activities are designed for oncologists (in both community and academic settings), nurses, pharmacists, case managers, and other health care professionals involved in the care of patients with cancer.

Jan. 16: [NCCN 2018-2019 Oncology Case Manager and Medical Director Program™: Update on Management of Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia](#)

Jan. 25: [NCCN 2018-2019 Oncology Case Manager and Medical Director Program™: Management of Bone Health in Patients with Cancer](#)

Feb. 1: [NCCN 2018-2019 Oncology Case Manager and Medical Director Program™: Recognition and Management of Immunotherapy-Related Toxicity](#)

Feb. 8: [NCCN 2019 Congress Series™: Breast Cancer with Updates from 2018 San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium](#)

Feb. 19: [NCCN 2018-2019 Oncology Case Manager and Medical Director Program™: Integrating Palliative Care into the Oncology Care Continuum](#)

Tools & Resources



[Cancer and Careers](#) is hosting an educational series for health care professionals that covers practical and legal issues concerning balancing work and cancer. All sessions are free and pre-registration is required. One continuing education credit will be provided free of charge to eligible oncology nurses and social workers upon approval from listed agencies.

The **CDC's** Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report and Medscape announced a new [free continuing education \(CE\) activity](#) for public health officials, family medicine specialists, gastroenterologists, internists, obstetrician-gynecologists, nurses, pharmacists, and other clinicians.

The **National Cancer Institute (NCI)**, in collaboration with the American Cancer Society, the CDC and the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries released a series of [digital resources and materials](#) from their Annual Report to the Nation, which include downloadable graphics and social media messages. NCI also updated data on smoking laws on [State Cancer Profiles](#) in the [Screening and Risk Factors Table](#).

Collaboratives

Regional Cancer Control Collaboratives working to bring public and private partners together to reduce the burden of cancer. For information on the regional collaboratives visit:

- [Northwest Florida Cancer Control Collaborative](#)
- [Northeast Florida Cancer Control Collaborative](#)
- [North Central Florida Cancer Control Collaborative](#)
- [East Central Florida Cancer Control Collaborative](#)
- [Southeast Florida Cancer Control Collaborative](#)
- [Southwest Florida Cancer Control Collaborative](#)

To be added to the contact list for any of these collaboratives, please send an email request to Cancer@flhealth.gov.

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