



Center for Women's Health

Katherine L. Williams, M.D.  Kelly N. Brewster, MSN, WHNP



HPV

Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) is a virus that causes warts. It is one of the most common sexually transmitted diseases. An estimated 24 million people in the US are infected with HPV; 80% of the population will contract the virus during their lifetime. The virus is spread from person to person contact with infected cells and with intercourse.

HPV can cause genital warts called condyloma accuminata. Although the warts may go away over time, the virus may remain in the body. Some require treatment to remove the warts. This can be done with a topical cream, freezing or burning the lesions.

Some types of HPV are associated with cancer of the cervix. These types are designated as high risk. New recommendations for pap screening include an HPV test for women over age 30. This specifically tests for the high risk types of HPV. If the virus has persisted beyond the age of 30, it is more likely to cause problems. Many women who were unaware that they have HPV are learning of the disease for the first time.

The news is very upsetting for most. However, it is not a reason to point fingers, as it could have been something that either partner had contracted from a previous relationship. Since men do not get pap smears, most do not know that they have HPV. Many men and women do not know that they have the disease because the lesions are not visible to the naked eye or their immune system is strong enough to control the symptoms; i.e. the warts or precancerous cells. However, with HPV testing your doctor can be aware if you are one that requires additional studies.

Although there is no cure for HPV, some can get rid of it. With proper rest and nutrition, avoidance of tobacco and minimizing stress, your body could overcome it. Tobacco use has been shown to accelerate the growth of the virus, so avoid cigarettes and second hand smoke. A vaccine for women is in the final stages of development and soon will be available to the public. Meanwhile, I encourage annual screening for all to help control this most problematic disease.

Contact Us

Ph: (985) 249-7022
Fx: (985) 249-7048

606 W. 12th Avenue
Covington, LA 70433

Email: info@klwmd.com

Web: www.klwmd.com