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I had just started my third year at university, planning my future as a comedy writer and actress. Then my world was turned upside down.

I was diagnosed with cervical cancer.

This came as a shock to me, being so young, I just hadn't expected that news.

”

Karen Hobbs, 27
Cervical cancer patient

About The Eve Appeal

The Eve Appeal was launched in 2002 and is the UK's **only national gynaecological cancer research charity**. Our mission is to raise funds for research and to save lives from these diseases.

The Eve Appeal shares in a united vision with the Department of Women's Cancer at University College London. Our vision is simple: A future where fewer women develop and more women survive gynaecological cancers.

If you have any comments or suggestions for improving future editions please get in touch directly using the contact details below. To access our list of references, please contact us directly.

All information correct at time of publication

Where can I get further information?

Tel: 020 7605 0100
Email: office@eveappeal.org.uk
Web: www.eveappeal.org.uk
Twitter: @eveappeal



The Eve Appeal, 15b Berghem Mews, Blythe Road, London W14 0HN
tel: 020 7605 0100 ♥ reg. charity no. 1091708 and SC042612
www.eveappeal.org.uk ♥ office@eveappeal.org.uk



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the **eve** appeal

protecting women from **gynaecological** cancers

What women need to know...

...about **cervical cancer**

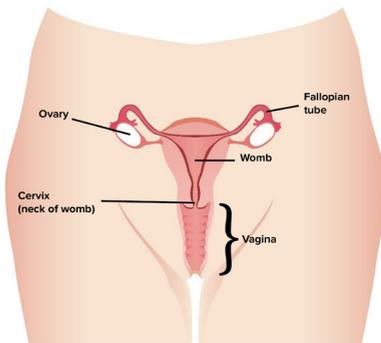
signs & symptoms information leaflet



Key messages for women about cervical cancer

- ♥ In the UK around 3,200 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer each year. 1 in 135 women will be diagnosed with cervical cancer in their lifetime.¹
- ♥ Cervical cancer is cancer of the cervix. The cervix is also known as the neck of the womb and connects a woman's womb and her vagina.
- ♥ Cervical cancer can affect women of all ages, but is most common in women between 30 – 45 years of age. It is very rare in women under 25.
- ♥ Nearly all cervical cancers are caused by a few types of the human papillomavirus (HPV), a common infection that most sexually active men and women get sometime during their life.
- ♥ Cervical screening (previously called a smear test) can prevent cervical cancer and save thousands of lives each year by detecting HPV and pre-cancerous changes in the cells of the cervix. These early changes are not cancer themselves and can be easily treated to prevent cancer developing.
- ♥ In the UK, the NHS cervical cancer vaccination programme is available to girls aged 12-13. The vaccine can prevent cervical cancer by significantly reducing the risk of certain types of HPV infection. However, it does not prevent all types of cervical cancer, so it is still important for girls who have the vaccine to undergo routine screening from the age of 25.

The female reproductive system



Key signs and symptoms of cervical cancer

While the signs and symptoms of cervical cancer aren't always obvious and may not be present in all cases, it is important to note that the following are associated with cervical cancer:

- ♥ Unusual bleeding, including:
 - ♥ Vaginal bleeding after sex – this is often the first noticeable sign
 - ♥ Abnormal bleeding at any other time, e.g. in-between periods or bleeding after the menopause
- ♥ Back pain
- ♥ Discomfort during sex
- ♥ Unusual vaginal discharge

However, the vast majority of women with the signs and symptoms listed above do not have cervical cancer. Also, some women do not experience any signs or symptoms at all.

If you are concerned about any of the above, you should see your GP as soon as possible.

Risk factors...

The fact that HPV infection is very common but cervical cancer is relatively uncommon suggests that only a very small proportion of women are vulnerable to the effects of an HPV infection. There are additional risk factors that affect a woman's chance of developing cervical cancer.

These include:

- ♥ **Smoking** - women who smoke are twice as likely to develop cervical cancer as women who don't. Smoking impairs your ability to clear HPV effectively, which could lead to pre-cancerous cell changes.
- ♥ **Long term use of the oral contraceptive pill** – women who take the pill are thought to have up to twice the risk of developing cervical cancer compared to those who don't. However, the pill reduces the risk of ovarian and endometrial (womb) cancer.
- ♥ **Immunosuppression** – women on immunosuppressive drugs can be at increased risk of developing cervical cancer.

Get involved

Title..... Name.....
Address.....
..... Postcode.....
Tel..... Email.....

I would like further information on...

- The Eve Appeal
- Volunteering
- Leaving a legacy
- Fundraising
- Being a case study
- Making a regular donation

I would like to donate...

I wish to donate £.....

- cheque (payable to The Eve Appeal) **OR**
- credit/debit card

Card type..... Expiry date.....

Card number

Security code (last 3 digits on back of card)

Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 donated.
Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year.

- I am a UK taxpayer*
- I am not a UK taxpayer

*I want to Gift Aid this donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to The Eve Appeal (Gynaecology Cancer Research Fund). I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Signature..... Date.....

Please return to:

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