

When should I have a Pap Smear?

You should have your first Pap Smear test after you become sexually active. You should have regular Pap Smears once a year or as advised by your doctor.

How should I prepare myself for a Pap Smear?

Wash your external genitalia thoroughly with soap. DO NOT DOUCHE or wash inside the vagina. If you are menstruating, have excessive vaginal discharge, or if vaginal medication is being used, the Pap Smear should be postponed.

What can I do to help?

When having the test, relax your stomach and legs and breath slowly and deeply.

For more information, advice or counselling, visit or call one of our clinics

Port of Spain Clinic

79 Oxford Street
Port-of-Spain
Tel: 627-6732, 623-4764/5169
Fax: 625-2256

Outreach (Mobile Clinic) ext 163

De Living Room

(Youth Centre -under 25 years)

141 Henry Street
Port of Spain
Tel: 623-4764

San Fernando Clinic

6a Lord Street
San Fernando
Tel: 652-3065
Fax: 652-3491

Tobago Clinic

61 Bacolet Street
Scarborough
Tel: 639-6892

<http://www.ttfpa.org>



A Publication of the Family Planning Association of Trinidad and Tobago.



do **not**
douché
before a
Pap smear

Where can I have my Pap Smear done?

Your Pap Smear can be done at any of the clinics of the Family Planning Association of Trinidad and Tobago, as well as the Mobile Clinic, listed on the back of this brochure.

what
every woman
should know

What is a Pap Smear?

A Pap Smear is a screening test that is used to detect abnormal cells of the cervix. The cervix is located at the entrance of the womb. It can also detect vaginal infections. However, the Pap Smear does not detect all sexually transmitted infections (STIs) such as HIV or venereal diseases.

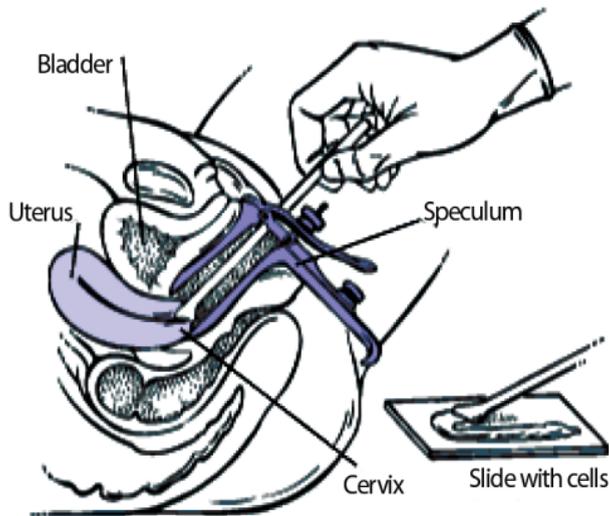
Pap Smears
do not detect
all STIs

How is a Pap Smear done?

You will be asked to undress from the waist down and to lay on an examination table with your legs apart and your feet in stirrups. The vagina (front passage) is opened with a small metal instrument (speculum) so that the cervix can be seen.

A cyto-brush and spatula are used to obtain cells from the cervix. This is painless and takes only a few seconds. The material on the cyto-brush is smeared onto a glass slide and sprayed with a chemical that fixes it onto the slide.

The slide is then sent to the laboratory to be examined under a microscope. Results are ready in two to three weeks.



The Pap Smear

What do the results mean?

A normal result means that your cells are healthy. An abnormal result can be a sign of a number of changes in the cells of your cervix such as:

- **Inflammation/Irritation**

This can be caused by an infection of the cervix, including a yeast infection, infection of the human papilloma virus (HPV) or the herpes virus, or some other infection.

- **Signs of cancer**

Cancer in its early or late stages.

A nurse or a doctor will carefully explain your results to you.

If applicable they will also discuss with you the necessary treatment.

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