

DATE:	27 October 2025
TO:	All Health Care Providers that Perform Cervical Cancer Screening
FROM:	Alberta Precision Laboratories and Alberta Cervical Cancer Screening Program
RE:	Change of Screening for Cervical Cancer from Cytology to Primary HPV Testing (age 50-69)

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Message

- Starting November 5, 2025, community cervical cancer screening for individuals aged 50-69 will transition to primary high-risk Human papillomavirus (hrHPV) testing.
- Efforts are underway to expand screening to additional age cohorts.
- If hrHPV is detected, genotyping will be performed for HPV 16 and 18 as well as reflex Pap test. All HPV 16 and 18 positive individuals should be referred to colposcopy, other high-risk strains should be followed according to the cytology findings.
- Review and follow information about HPV primary screening and clinical pathways at ahs.ca/hpvtesting.
- Scan QR code to access pathway:



Background/Rationale

- This change aligns with the Canadian Action Plan for Elimination of Cervical Cancer in Canada 2020-2030.
- Testing for hrHPV improves early detection and allows for extended screening intervals, reducing the lifetime screening burden.

How this will impact you

- No change to the current APL [Gynecological Cytopathology Requisition](#) or Cervical Cancer screening collection devices.
- No change for other age groups (≤49 Years old), regarding specimen collection, screening method, or clinical recommendations.
- Any orders placed using the AHS Epic electronic health system will follow the ≤49 years old pathway.
- Changes to community cervical cancer screening requests as follows:
 - For individuals aged 50-69 years old at the time of collection, hrHPV will be performed.
 - Results for ages 50-69 will be reported in two parts:
 - “HPV primary screen” for all results
 - “Gynecological Cytology” only if hrHPV is detected or indeterminate, with follow-up guidance included.



Action Required

- Review and follow updated screening algorithm (HPV Primary Clinical Pathway) for ages 50-69 at ahs.ca/hpvtesting.
- Continue to follow guidance on laboratory reports for follow up.
- ACCSP will continue sending screening invitations, result recalls and follow-up letters to eligible women
- Symptomatic patients should be referred as per the [Provincial Adult Gynecology Referral Pathway](#)

Questions/Concerns

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Approved by

- Dr. Carolyn O'Hara, Chief Medical Laboratory Officer