

Cervical cancer screening coverage for women less than 21 years old

Background: In continuing efforts to support quality, evidence-based health care, Healthy Blue is notifying you of a new clinical guideline regarding cervical cancer screening (Pap test) for average risk women under 21 years of age.

Cervical cancer screening is considered **medically necessary** for women under 21 years old who are chronically immunosuppressed (for example, organ transplant recipients or seropositive for the human immunodeficiency virus [HIV]). Cervical cancer screening for women under 21 years old is considered not medically necessary for all other indications not listed above.

Effective with service dates on or after January 1, 2021, cervical cancer screening procedures and testing will not be reimbursed as a covered benefit for average risk women younger than age 21. Please access CG-Med-XX on the Healthy Blue provider website to review the guideline.

The American Cancer Society, the American Society for Colposcopy and Cervical Pathology, and the American Society for Clinical Pathology all recommend against the use of cervical cancer screening in women younger than age 21.¹ The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommend that cervical cancer screening should begin at age 21, and women younger than 21 should not be screened, regardless of the age of sexual initiation or the presence of other behavior-related risk factors.² The United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) currently recommends against cervical cancer screening for women younger than age 21, giving it a D rating. This means that there is moderate or high certainty that the service has no net benefit or the harms outweigh the benefits.³

References:

1. Saslow D, Solomon D, Lawson HW, et al.; American Cancer Society; American Society for Colposcopy and Cervical Pathology; American Society for Clinical Pathology, American Cancer Society, American Society for prevention and early detection of cervical cancer. *Am J Clin Pathol.* 2012; 137(4):516-542.
2. American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. Practice Bulletin Number 131: Screening for Cervical Cancer. *Obstet Gynecol.* 2012; 120(5):1222-1238.
3. United States Preventive Services Task Force. Cervical Cancer. March 2012. Available at: <http://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/page/document/updatesummaryfinal/cervical-cancer-screening>.

<https://provider.healthybluemo.com>

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