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Launch of new IARC atlas:
*Using HPV tests for cervical cancer screening and
managing HPV-positive women – a practical online guide*

Lyon, France, 4 March 2023 – Cervical cancer kills more than 300 000 women per year globally and is the fourth most common cancer type in women today. About 90% of deaths from cervical cancer occur in low- and middle-income countries. However, cervical cancer is one of the most preventable cancer types.

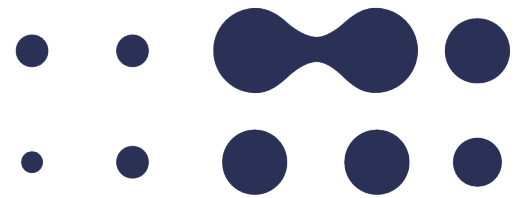
To mark International Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Awareness Day, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) is launching a new IARC atlas,¹ a practical online guide designed to help health professionals use HPV tests for cervical cancer screening and managing HPV-positive women.

“Elimination of cervical cancer is possible through vaccination of adolescent girls against HPV, screening of women with HPV testing, and appropriate management of screen-detected cervical precursor lesions and cancers,” says Dr Partha Basu, Head of the Early Detection, Prevention, and Infections Branch at IARC. “The new atlas is a step-by-step online resource for self-learning and is a precious tool for providers of cervical screening and precancer management in all countries that are implementing HPV-based cervical cancer screening.”

The new atlas covers the natural history of cervical cancer, the principles of HPV testing and different HPV tests for screening, steps for the collection of specimens for HPV testing, interpretation of the test results, and management of screen-positive women, including women living with HIV. This resource, which is aligned with the latest World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines on screening and management of screen-positive women, is [freely available online](#).

In November 2020, WHO formally adopted a global strategy to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer as a public health problem worldwide. The strategy incorporates three specific targets to be achieved by 2030 by every country: vaccinating at least 90% of adolescent girls against HPV, screening at least 70% of women aged 30–49 years with an HPV test at least twice in their lifetime, and appropriate management of 90% of women with cervical precancer or cancer.

¹ Joshi S, Basu P, Lucas E (2023). Using human papillomavirus (HPV) tests for cervical cancer screening and managing HPV-positive women – a practical online guide: IARC CancerBase No. 18 [Internet]. Lyon, France: International Agency for Research on Cancer. Available from: <https://screening.iarc.fr/atlasHPV.php>.



With the recent recommendation from WHO to switch to HPV-based cervical cancer screening, countries are gradually adopting HPV testing. There is a huge need to strengthen capacity in countries for providers to be able to screen women with a validated HPV test and appropriately manage women who test positive for HPV.

To facilitate the WHO initiative to eliminate cervical cancer, and especially to build capacity in low- and middle-income countries, the WHO Academy is producing a learning programme on cervical screening and management aimed at health professionals at various levels. The new IARC HPV atlas will be a key component of the learning programme that can be used by master trainers in different countries to train various groups of health professionals.

Note to the Editor

The new IARC atlas ([Using HPV tests for cervical cancer screening and managing HPV-positive women – a practical online guide](#)) is the third in a series of online atlases recently produced by IARC to improve cervical cancer early detection and treatment. The [Atlas of colposcopy: principles and practice](#) was launched in September 2017, and the [Atlas of visual inspection of the cervix with acetic acid for screening, triage, and assessment for treatment](#) was launched in November 2020.

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The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) is part of the World Health Organization. Its mission is to coordinate and conduct research on the causes of human cancer, the mechanisms of carcinogenesis, and to develop scientific strategies for cancer control. The Agency is involved in both epidemiological and laboratory research and disseminates scientific information through publications, meetings, courses, and fellowships. If you wish your name to be removed from our press release emailing list, please write to com@iarc.fr.