According to the American Cancer Society, an estimated 13,240 women in the United States will be diagnosed with cervical cancer in 2018 and 4,170 women will die from cervical cancer. The good news is that advances in screening and treatment over the last 20-30 years means more women are surviving cervical cancer than ever. Most of those diagnosed will survive for at least 5 years after diagnosis and many will be cured.
What is HPV?
Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is a group of 100+ related viruses that can be spread through sexual contact. Nearly 80 million people in the U.S. currently have HPV. Most people who become infected with HPV do not know they have it. HPV typically goes away by itself within about two years, but if HPV stays in the body for many years, it can cause cancer.7

HPV and Cancer
Most cervical cancers are caused by two types of HPV: types 16 and 18. HPV type 16 is also known to cause the majority of HPV-related anal and throat cancers. HPV is also known to cause penile, rectal, vaginal and vulvar cancers. Fortunately, there is a regular screening test for cervical cancer, but there are not recommended screening tests for the other HPV–related cancers.7

HPV Vaccination
The HPV vaccine protects against the HPV types that cause most HPV cancers and can prevent most of these cancers from occurring. The HPV vaccine is recommended for:
- Females ages 9-26
- Males ages 9-21

The vaccine is most effective with the greatest immune response when given between the ages of 11-12. When the first dose of HPV vaccine is given before the age of 15, only two doses are needed. If the first dose is given after the age of 15, three doses are needed.5

Patients should talk to their healthcare provider about the right vaccination schedule for their child or themselves.

Reduce the risk of HPV-related cancers by getting the HPV vaccination, getting screened for cervical cancer and limiting the number of sexual partners.

Preventing cancer is easier than treating cancer.

Cervical Cancer Screening
Cervical cancer screening, or Pap test, is the best way to find cervical cancer early by detecting changes in the cervix at a cellular level. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says that cervical cancer is easiest to treat when it is found early.7

The rate of screening for cervical cancer has decreased over the last 15 years. In 2000, the rate in Wyoming was above 80% for women screened for cervical cancer in the last 3 years and was reported at just below 70% in 2016. The U.S. average rate for the same population has also decreased from over 85% to just above 75%.8

Wyoming Integrated Cancer Services Program
The Wyoming Integrated Cancer Services Program reimburses participating healthcare providers for screenings, such as mammograms, clinical breast exams, and Pap tests to enrolled clients in Wyoming. The screenings are paid for by funds from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program and the National Breast Cancer Foundation.

Residents who are eligible for the program include women who:
- Are 50 years or older
- Have no insurance (Medicare Part A is allowed)
- Have a household income at or below 250% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines

Other qualifications may include women who are:
- Ages 40-49 who have been previously diagnosed with breast cancer
- Ages 30-40 who have not had a Pap test in the last 5 years
- Ages 21-49 who have been told by a healthcare professional that additional diagnostic testing is needed for breast or cervical cancer or cervical pre-cancer

For more information about the program, to download an application, or to apply online, please visit: www.health.wyo.gov/cancer.