

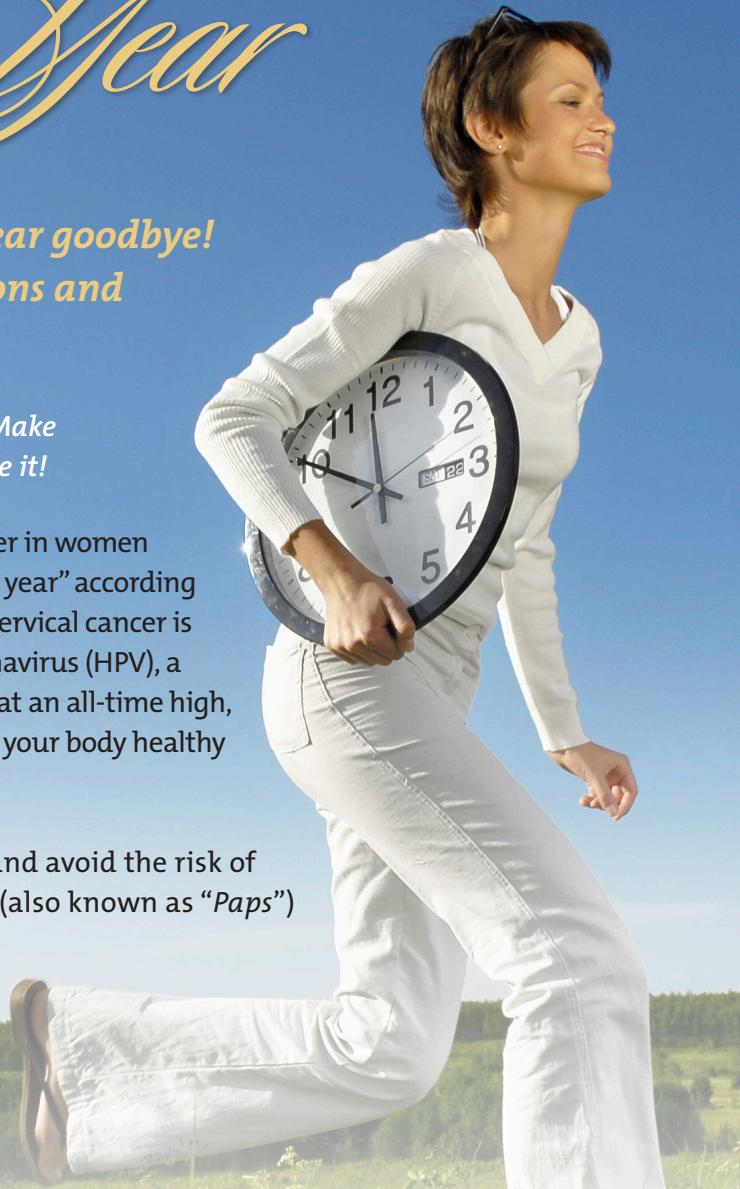
Happy Pappy New Year

*Raise your champagne glass and kiss the old year goodbye!
It's a new beginning: time for creative resolutions and
a passionate pledge to embrace HEALTH!*

*Time is on your side once again with the arrival of a New Year! Make
it the finest year of all for your health and wellness – you deserve it!*

Did you know that “cervical cancer is the fifth most common cancer in women worldwide with approximately 471,000 new cases diagnosed each year” according to CervicalCancer.org. Attacking a woman’s reproductive organs, cervical cancer is most often spread through various strains of the human papillomavirus (HPV), a sexually transmitted infection. With prevalence of cervical cancer at an all-time high, it’s important to take the proper precautions to keep your life and your body healthy and strong!

Prevention and wellness begins with knowledge! To live well and avoid the risk of cervical cancer, it is important for women to have *Pap smears* (also known as “*Paps*”) done starting at age 21 or once one becomes sexually active and every two years thereafter. A *Pap* checks for changes in your cervical cells and detects infection or the presence of cervical cancer. Being proactive with your health transforms the fear of the unknown to the freedom of peace of mind!



"Abnormal" Pap results...

Don't jump to conclusions when you hear that your *Pap* has come back as "abnormal." It's a terrifying thought, but many times "abnormal" results are nothing out of the ordinary. The term "abnormal" may only mean that there is a small problem with the cervix, most often from unhealthy cells that will disappear on their own. Work with your physician to figure out the best treatment options, which may include the following:

- Colposcopy: where a colposcope is used to detect the abnormal cells in detail.
- Endocervical curettage: when a sample of cells is collected with a small spoon-shaped tool called a curette.
- Biopsy: where a small sample of cervical tissue is removed and sent to a lab for further study.

* *Unfortunately, once a more advanced cervical cancer is present, treatment(s) may become more invasive and can cause infertility.*

Spirit of Women hospitals encourage, support and appreciate the life you live! Partner with your local Spirit of Women hospital and strike down a path of healthful triumph as you conquer cervical cancer before it has a chance to disrupt your dreams!

SOURCES:

Center for Disease Control
CervicalCancer.org
Womenshealth.gov
Mayo Clinic

Need an OB/GYN physician? Call St. Luke's Physician Referral Service at 314-205-6060 to find the right one for you. Or search the online physician directory at www.stlukes-stl.com.

It is crucial to know and identify the signs and symptoms of cervical cancer. According to the Mayo Clinic, even if early signs of cervical cancer may not exist, it is **IMPERATIVE** for women to have *Pap smears* done regularly in order to detect any potential threat. If *Paps* are not performed on a regular basis and cancer goes unnoticed, the following signs may appear:

- Vaginal bleeding after intercourse, between periods or after menopause
- Watery or bloody vaginal discharge that may be heavy and have a foul odor
- Pelvic pain / pain during intercourse

We owe it to ourselves to be *prepared*. We owe it to our families to be *unwavering*. We owe it to the younger women in our lives who view us as a source of *inspiration* to undertake any potential health threat in our lives, leaving no room for defeat but only the possibility of **VICTORY!**

