

MH01D4502

Spread the
WORD about
Mammograms
and the
Pap Test

An Educational Resource For Health Care Professionals

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
National Cancer Institute

MH01D4502

OMH-RC-Knowledge Center
5515 Security Lane, Suite 101
Rockville, MD 20852
1-800-444-6472

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) commends your efforts to educate women about the importance of early cancer screening. To assist you, NCI is pleased to provide *Spread the Word about Mammograms and the Pap Test: An Educational Resource for Health Care Professionals*.

Using simple pictures and words, these flip charts illustrate many of the key messages that help women understand the importance of early cancer detection. Talking points that can be addressed while presenting the information are included. Two reproducible NCI pamphlets entitled *1) Mammograms: Not just once, but for a lifetime*; and *2) Pap Tests: A Healthy Habit for Life* are also included. Please feel free to photocopy the 2-sided easy-to-read pamphlets and distribute them to the women who attend your presentation.

Community health educators can present these flipcharts to small groups that are no larger than 10 people. The breast cancer flip chart is for women in their 40s or older and the cervical cancer for women age 18 or older (or younger who are sexually active) as well as for women age 65 or older.

An evaluation form is enclosed, please let us know how your presentation goes. Your comments will help us make NCI's cancer screening education efforts more effective. If you would like more information about breast and/or cervical cancer, please call NCI's Cancer Information Service at 1-800-4-CANCER.

Spread the **WORD** about
Mammograms





TALKING POINTS:

- Today I'd like to talk to you about how important it is to get mammograms regularly.
- A mammogram is an x-ray picture of your breast that can help find breast cancer before you or your doctor can feel it.
- It is one of the most important things a woman in her 40s or older can do for herself.
- Get mammograms every one to two years and help spread the word to your mother, sisters, daughters, and friends about this test.

Spread the **WORD** about
Mammograms



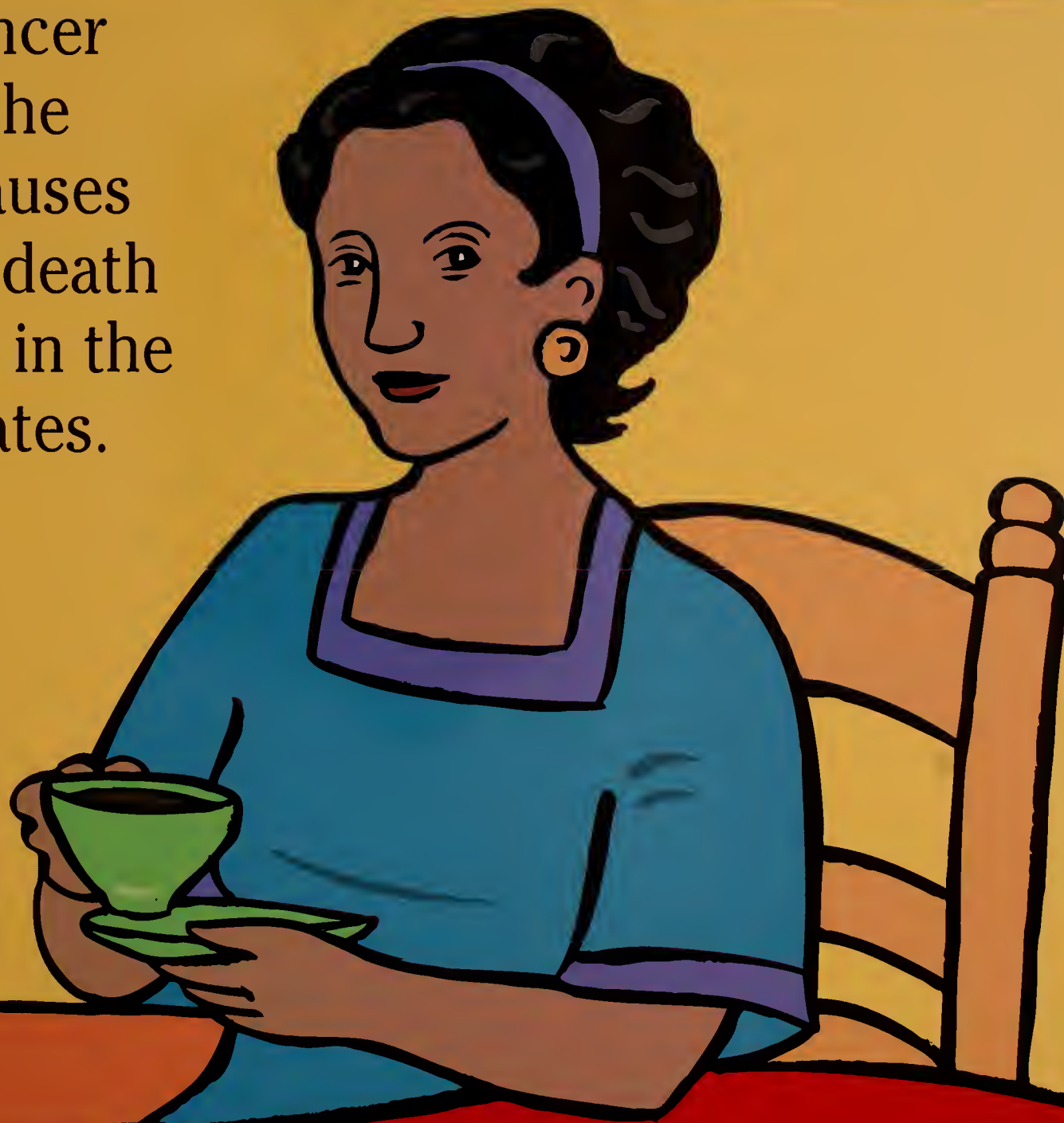
Breast cancer is one of the leading causes of cancer death in women in the United States.



TALKING POINTS:

- You may think you don't need a mammogram. You do, especially if you're in your 40s or older.
- The older you get, the greater your chances of getting breast cancer.
- It is important for all women age 40 or older to have a mammogram and clinical breast exam every one to two years. If every woman 40 and older had these exams on a regular basis, the death rate from breast cancer would drop.
- How many of you know a woman who has had breast cancer?
- Breast cancer is one of the most common cancers found in women in the United States.

Breast cancer
is one of the
leading causes
of cancer death
in women in the
United States.





TALKING POINTS:

- Here are some tips to help you get ready for your mammogram.
- If you are still having your periods, make your appointment for the week after it ends. During your period, your breasts may be tender, and the mammogram could be somewhat painful.
- On the day of the exam, don't put any deodorant, perfume, powder, or lotions on or around your breasts or underarms. Any of these can make your x-ray look suspicious.
- Wear clothes like a blouse or sweater with pants or a skirt, which make it easy for you to undress from the waist up.
- Bring any information about other mammograms or breast treatments you've had, and the phone number and address of your doctor so that your results can be sent to him or her.



Some tips
to help you
get ready
for your
mammogram

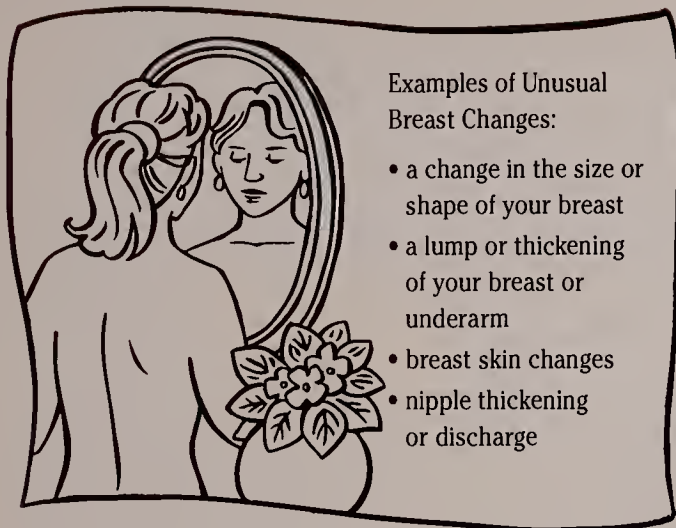


TALKING POINTS:

- Getting a mammogram is easy. It takes only a few minutes.
- You'll stand in front of a special x-ray machine and a trained technologist will place your breast on a small plastic tray. Another plastic tray is placed on top. For a few seconds, pressure is applied to flatten your breast while the x-ray is taken.
- The purpose of flattening your breast is to spread it out so that any lumps or breast changes are easier to see.
- The technologist will take two pictures of each of your breasts, one from the top and one from the side.
- The x-ray is given to a doctor called a radiologist who looks for signs of breast cancer or other problems. The radiologist will report the results to your doctor, who will then contact you.
- If you don't receive the results within a week, call your doctor or the mammography facility and ask for the report.
- How many of you have had a mammogram in the last year? Let's talk about what was positive about the experience.

Getting a Mammogram





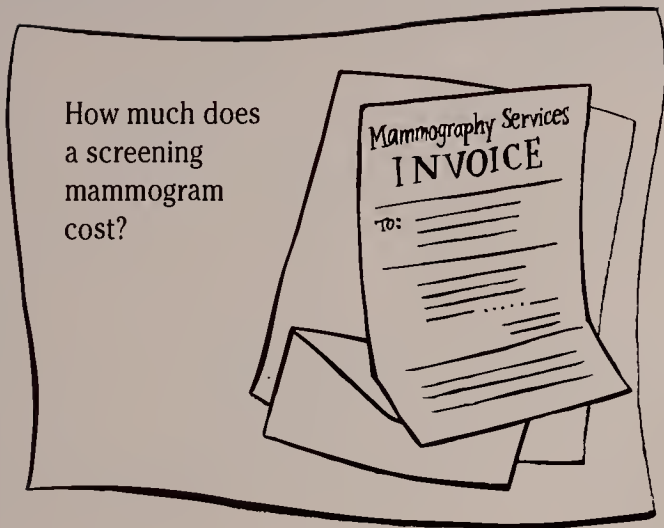
TALKING POINTS:

- There are two types of mammograms: screening mammograms and diagnostic mammograms. Let's talk first about diagnostic mammograms.
- A woman gets a diagnostic mammogram when she **has symptoms** of breast cancer, like a change in the size or shape of her breast, a lump or thickening of her breast or underarm, breast skin changes, or nipple thickening or discharge.
- Women who have any unusual changes to their breasts need to see their doctor as soon as possible.
- Most often, these changes turn out not to be cancer; but it is important to do the necessary tests to make sure.
- What we want to talk about today are screening mammograms—for women **without symptoms** of breast cancer.



Examples of Unusual Breast Changes:

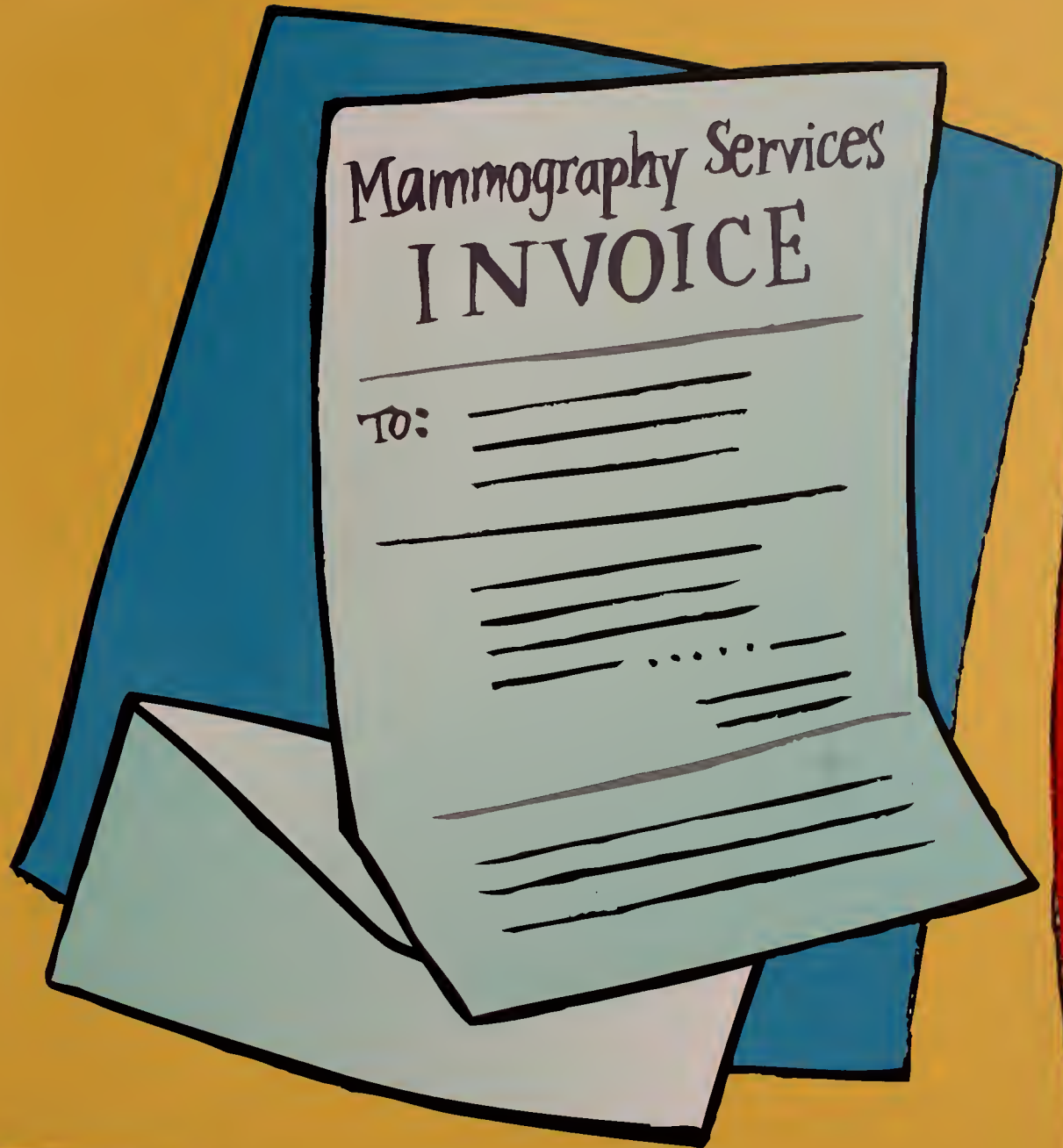
- a change in the size or shape of your breast
- a lump or thickening of your breast or underarm
- breast skin changes
- nipple thickening or discharge



TALKING POINTS:

- A screening mammogram generally costs between \$50 and \$150.
- Mammograms are often paid for by private insurance or by Medicare.
- There are some community groups that give free mammograms and some programs that charge you based on your income.
- How many of you use your Medicare benefits to pay for your mammograms?
- Medicare helps pay for the cost of one screening mammogram every year (that is, 12 calendar months from the time of the last mammogram).
- For information about Medicare coverage, you can call the Medicare Hotline at 1-800-Medicare (1-800-633-4227).

How much
does a
screening
mammogram
cost?



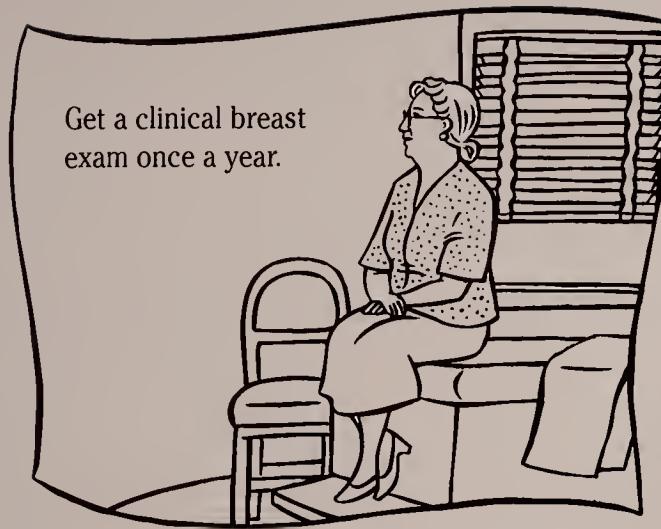
TALKING POINTS:



- Ask your doctor when you should start having mammograms and how often you need to have them. Decide on a plan with your doctor and follow it for the rest of your life.
- Your doctor's office can make the appointment. Or, you can make it yourself if the mammography facility you choose gives mammograms without a doctor's referral.
- Today, all mammography facilities must be certified by the Food and Drug Administration. This means that they all must meet the same quality standards for the equipment they use, the people who work there, and the records they keep.
- You can call the National Cancer Institute's Cancer Information Service at 1-800-4-CANCER to find out where to get a mammogram near your home.
- How many of you have a doctor who refers you for mammograms regularly?
- Don't wait for your doctor to bring it up. Ask your doctor to send you for a mammogram.



Ask your
doctor to
send you
for a
mammogram.

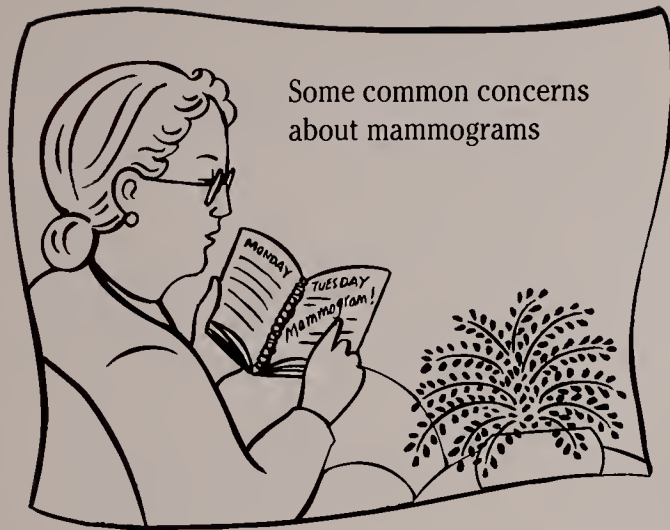


TALKING POINTS:

- It is also important for all women to have a clinical breast exam on a regular basis.
- When you have a regular check up, your doctor will give you a clinical breast exam. During this exam, your doctor will look at and feel for lumps in your breasts, underarms, and even your collarbone area.
- Many women may also choose to do a monthly breast self-exam to become familiar with the normal texture of their breasts. Remember a breast self-exam is never a substitute for regular screening mammograms for women in their 40s or older.

Get a clinical
breast exam
once a year.





[Some audiences have special concerns, including language and cultural barriers—listen to their concerns and include them as examples in future presentations of this flip chart.]

TALKING POINTS:

- There are some common concerns that keep women from having mammograms.
- “I’m afraid I’ll get too much radiation.” With modern mammography equipment, only a small amount of radiation is used.
- “A mammogram is painful.” Some women experience discomfort during a mammogram. The actual time when the breast is pressed against the plastic tray is only a few seconds. The compression is needed to get a clear x-ray of the breast.
- “I don’t need a mammogram unless I feel a lump in my breast.” The benefit of mammography is that it can find breast cancer and other breast changes before you or your doctor can feel them.
- “If I have breast cancer, I don’t think I can face it. I don’t want to know.” If breast cancer is found early and has not spread, the chances of successful treatment and surviving are very good.
- “Mammograms don’t always find breast cancer.” No medical test is 100% accurate, some breast changes don’t show up on a mammogram. That is why it is important to have a clinical breast exam once a year.
- Do any of you know of other concerns a woman might have to keep her from having a mammogram?

Some common
concerns about
mammograms



TALKING POINTS:

- Simply being a woman and getting older puts you at some risk for breast cancer. Most breast cancers occur after age 40.
- Your risk for breast cancer continues to increase over your lifetime.
- Most women who get breast cancer have no known risk factors, such as family history of the disease.
- Talk to your doctor about the risk factors for breast cancer.



Will I get
breast
cancer?



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Cancer Information Service

1-800-4-CANCER
(1-800-422-6237)

TALKING POINTS:

- For more information about breast cancer and mammograms, or to find a mammography facility in your area, call the National Cancer Institute's Cancer Information Service at 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237).
- CIS offices are open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., local time.
- Trained cancer information specialists will answer your questions in English or Spanish and send you free publications.



Cancer Information Service

1-800-4-CANCER

(1-800-422-6237)

Mammograms:
Not just once,
but for a
lifetime.

TALKING POINTS:

- Those of you who have had a mammogram are off to a good start, but once is not enough. Cancer can start to grow at any time.
- Regularly scheduled mammograms are the best way of finding breast cancer early.
- Don't take chances with your health. Make an appointment for a mammogram soon.

Mammograms:
Not just once,
but for a
lifetime.

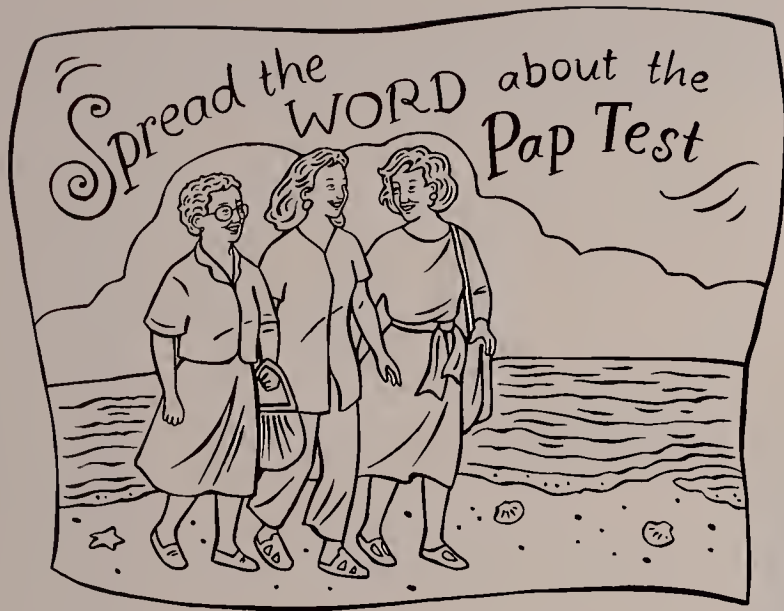
TALKING POINTS:

- Any questions?





Help
spread
the word
about
mammograms!



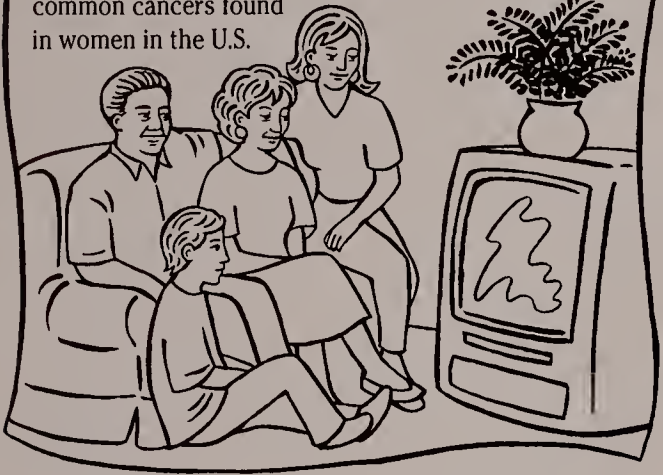
TALKING POINTS:

- Like most women today, you have a lot to think about, like caring for your family and your home, and your job.
- These demands make it easy for you to neglect your own needs, especially when it comes to your health.
- Women need to take the time to take care of their own bodies and health. It is the best choice they can make for their families.
- One way to do this is to look for cancer early or get cancer screening.
- Today I'd like to talk to you about one kind of cancer screening, a Pap test for cervical cancer.

Spread the **WORD** about the
Pap Test



Cervical Cancer is one of the most common cancers found in women in the U.S.

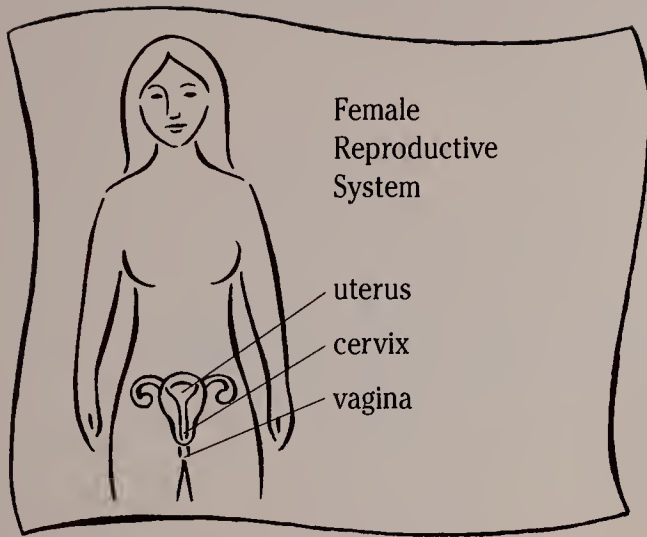


TALKING POINTS:

- Some of you may know a woman who has had cervical cancer because it is one of the most common cancers found in women in the United States.
- A woman can have cervical cancer and not know it because she may not have any symptoms.

Cervical cancer is one of the most common cancers found in women in the U.S.

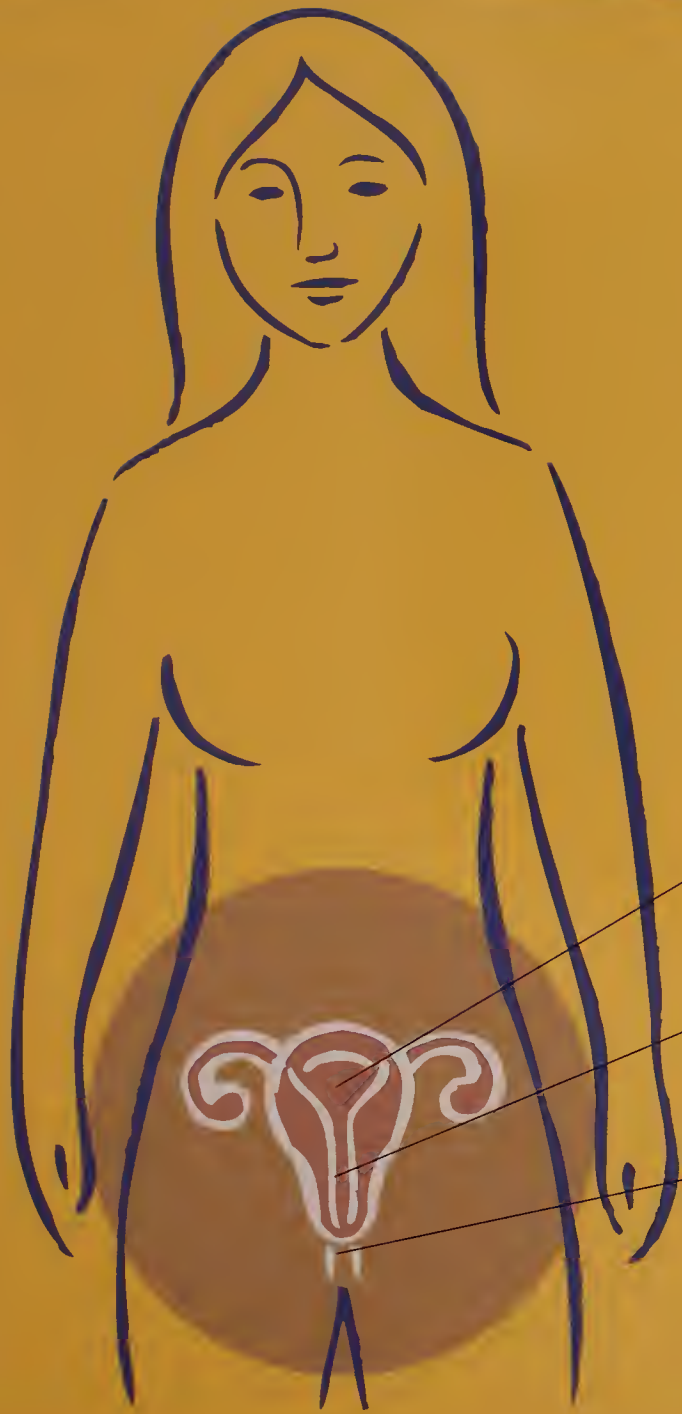




TALKING POINTS:

- The uterus or womb is located below your stomach.
- The cervix is located in the lower portion of the womb.
- The cervix opens into the vagina which leads to the outside of the body.

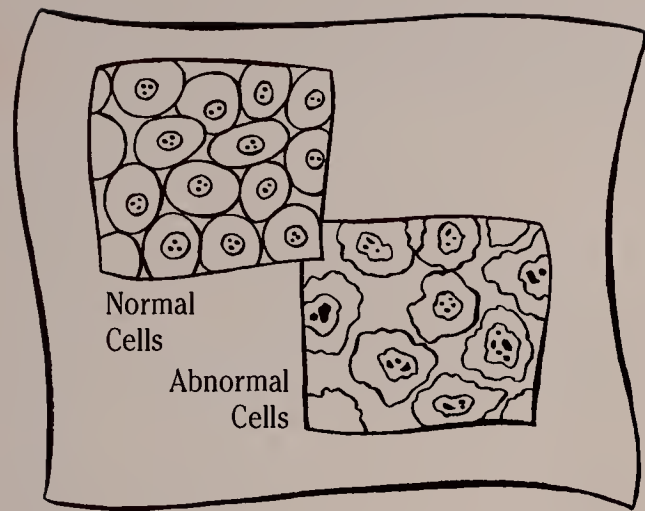
Female Reproductive System



uterus

cervix

vagina

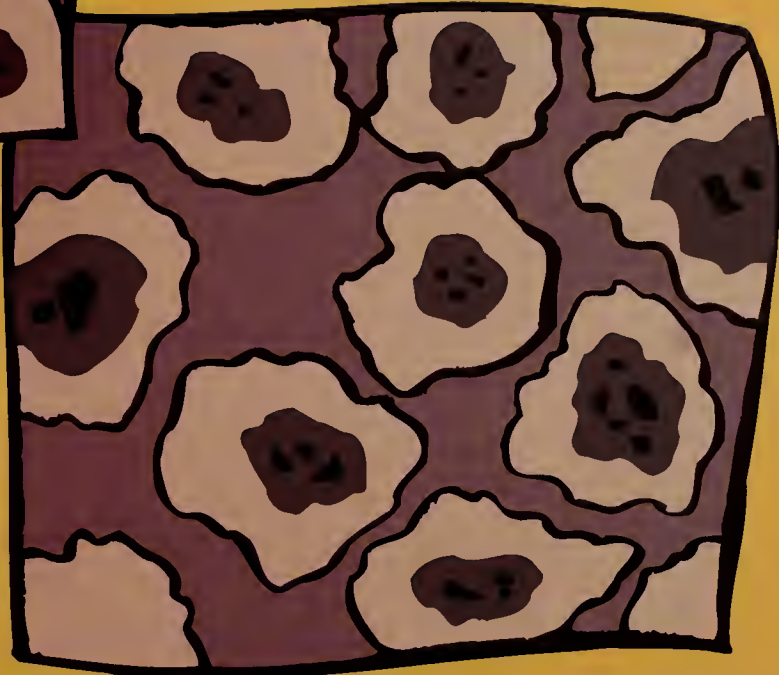


TALKING POINTS:

- Cervical cancer happens when abnormal cells begin to grow in the cervix.
- Finding and treating abnormal cells is important. If these cells are not treated, they can become cancer.
- There is a simple and safe screening test that you can get that can find abnormal cells in and around the cervix. This test is called the Pap test or Pap smear.
- A pap test should only take about one minute.

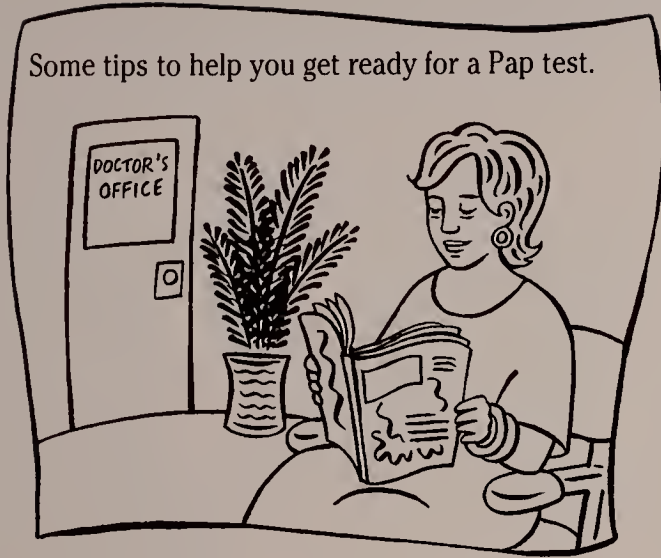


NORMAL CELLS



ABNORMAL
CELLS

Some tips to help you get ready for a Pap test.

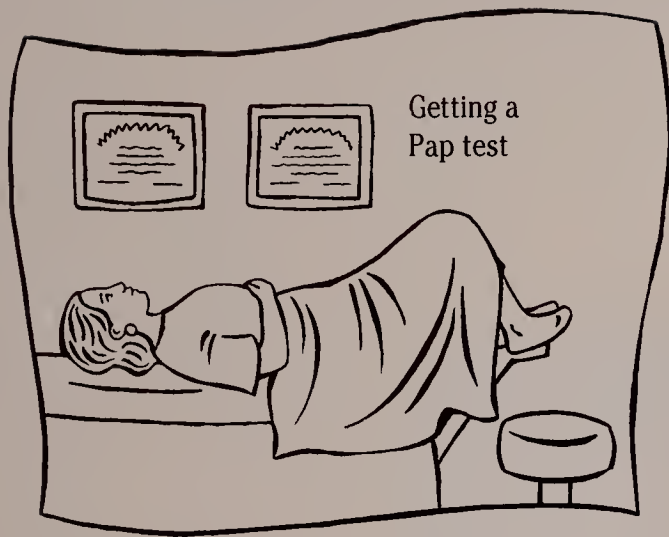


TALKING POINTS:

- You should have this test when you are not having your period.
- For about 2 days before a Pap test, you should not douche or use birth control foams, creams, or jellies or vaginal medicines (except as directed by your doctor).
- If you do use any of these, they might hide any abnormal cells.
- If you feel more comfortable being examined by a female doctor, ask if one is available.

Some tips to help you get ready for a Pap test.



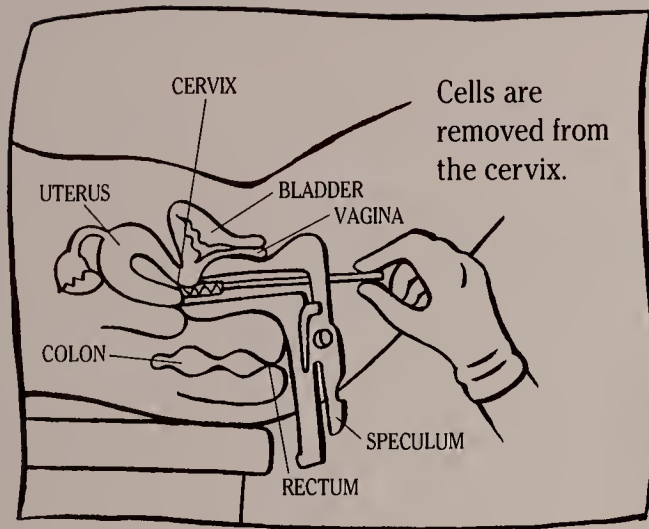


TALKING POINTS:

- A Pap test is done as part of a pelvic exam at your doctor's office.
- You will lie on your back on an exam table with your knees up and your feet placed in rests.
- To do the Pap test your doctor will use a special instrument called a speculum.
- The speculum is put into your vagina and opened up so that the walls of your vagina and cervix can be seen clearly.

Getting a Pap test

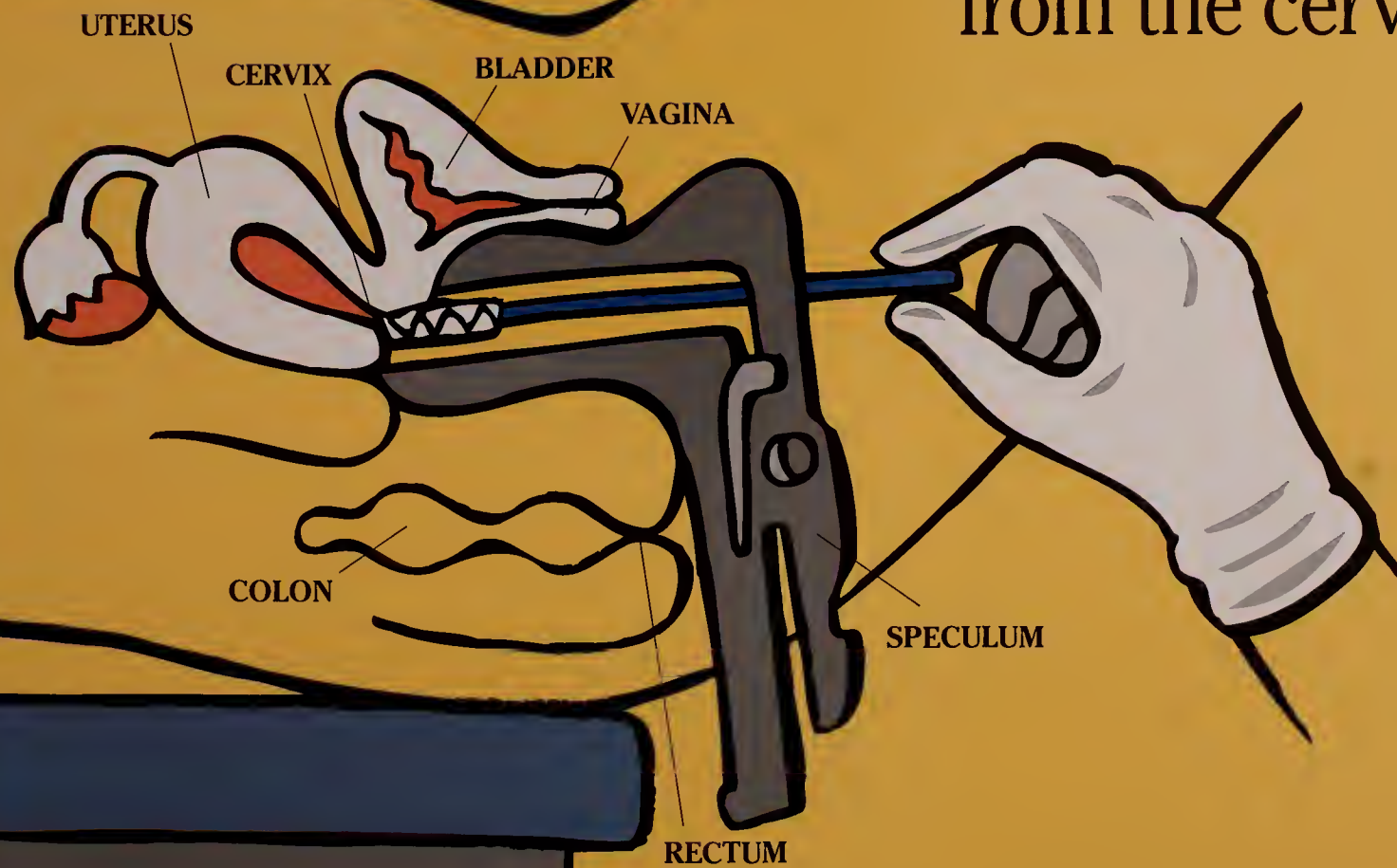




TALKING POINTS:

- A small brush is used to collect a few cells from the cervix.
- When the doctor takes the cells, you may feel a slight pinch.
- The cells from the Pap test are placed on a glass slide, sprayed with a protective coating, and sent to a lab to be checked. This will tell if the cells in your cervix are normal or abnormal.

Cells are removed
from the cervix.

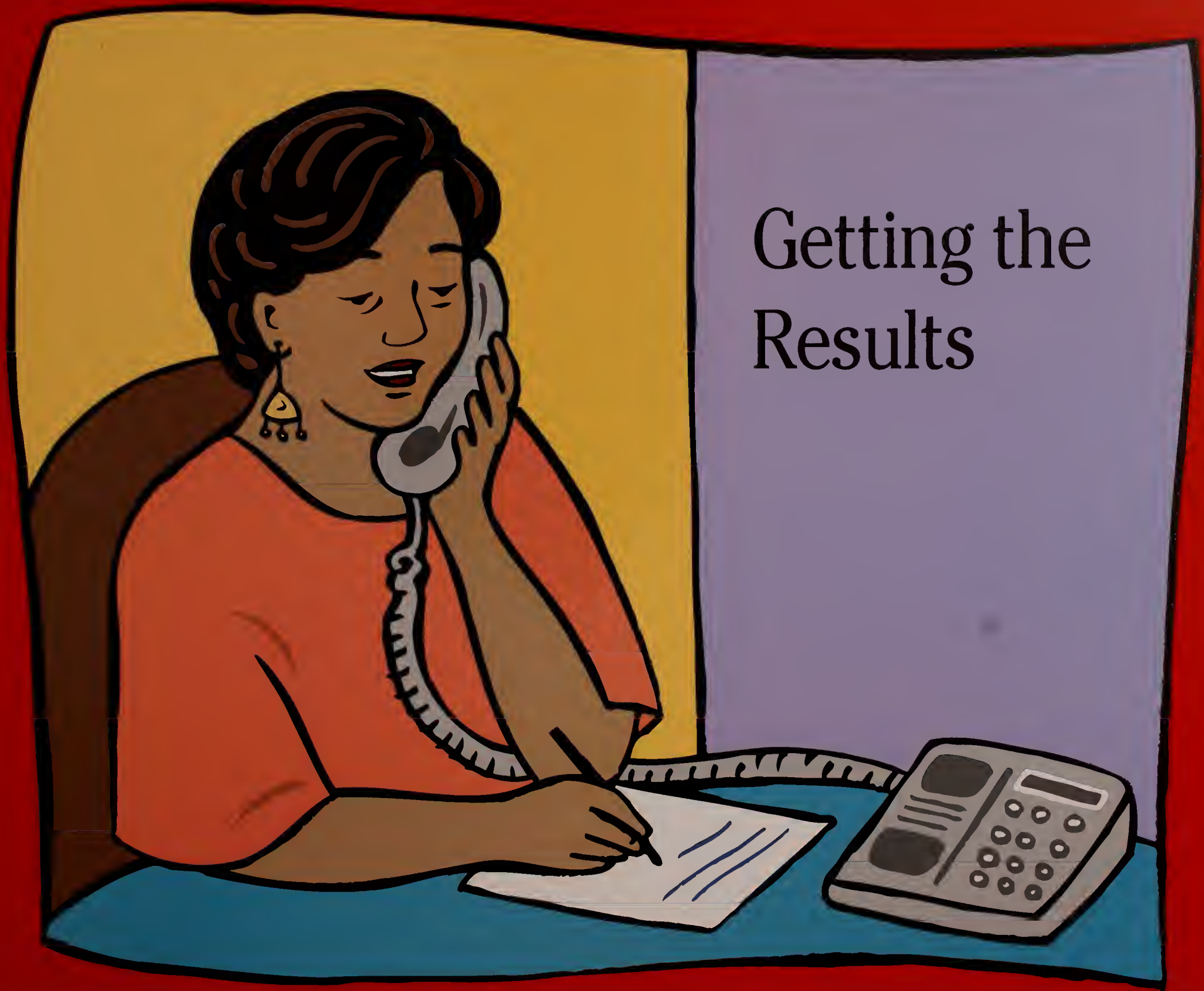


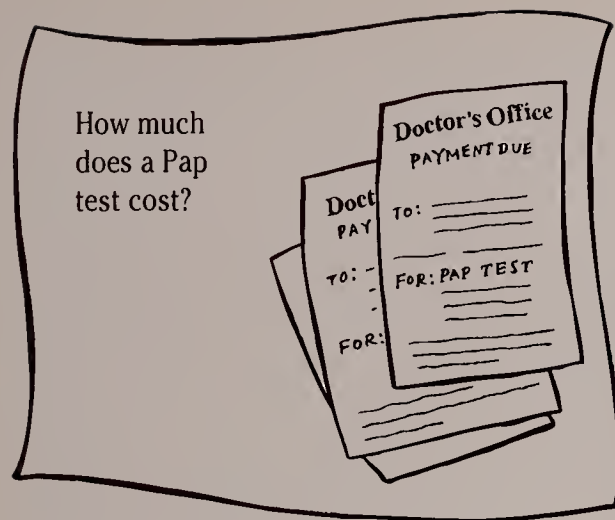


TALKING POINTS:

- Most doctors or clinics will either send a letter or call you with your test results but some only contact you if there is a problem. You may wish to call the clinic and ask for the results.
- If your results are abnormal, don't panic; most abnormal Pap tests are not cancer. You will need to return to the clinic soon for follow-up care.
- Have any of you had a Pap test in the last year?
What was positive about the experience?

Getting the Results

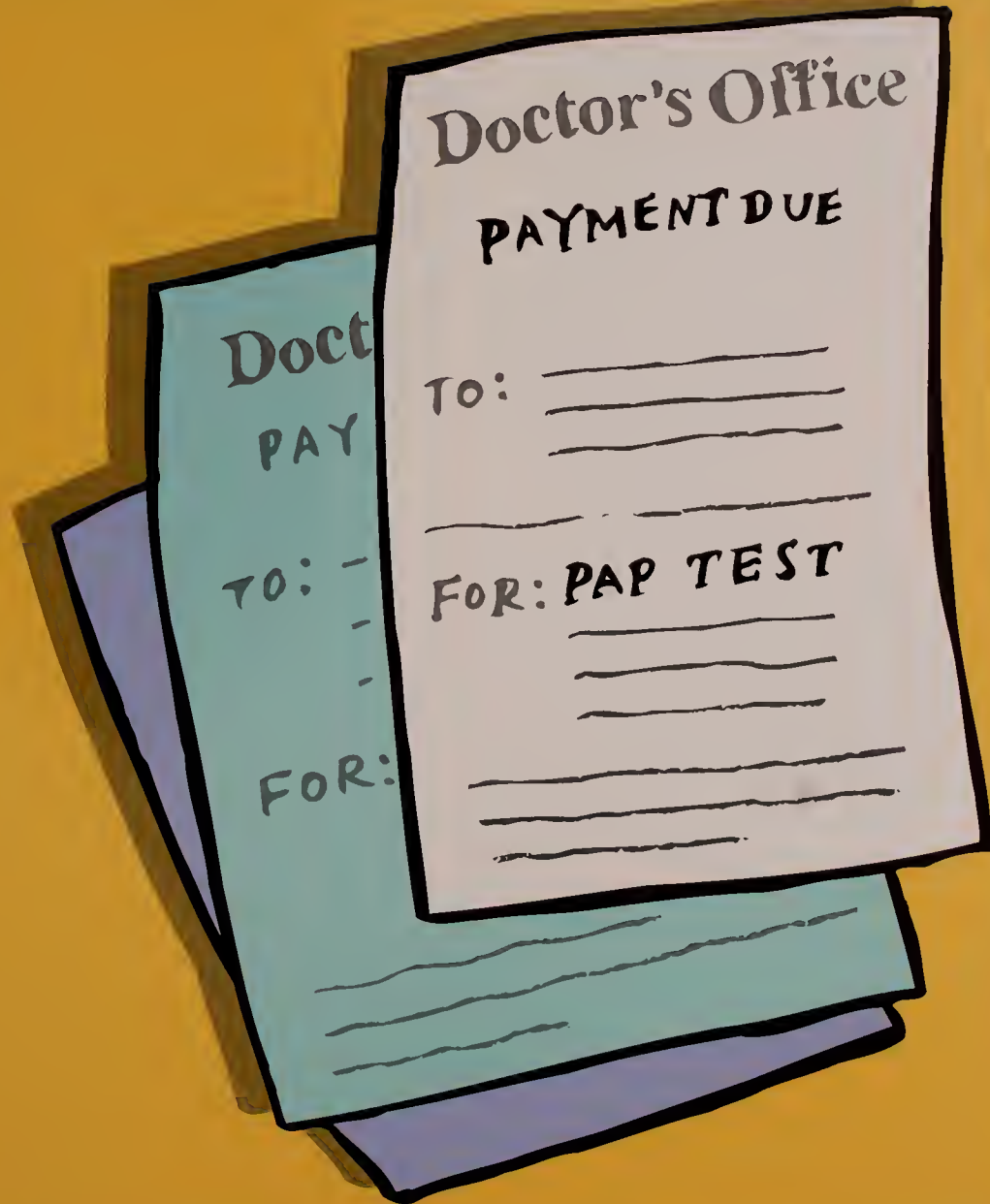


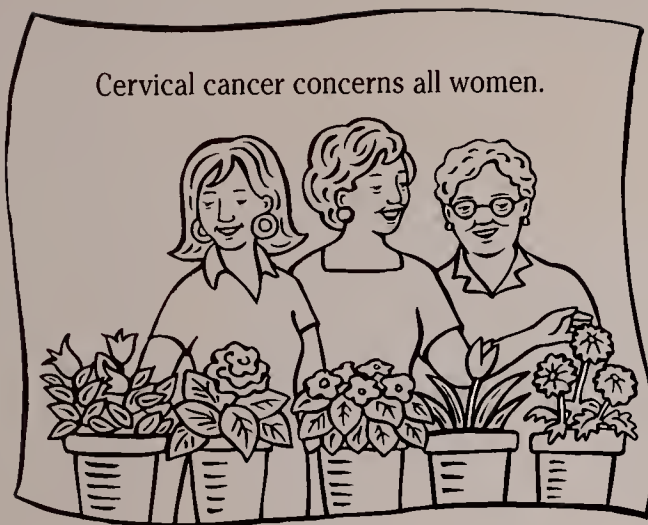


TALKING POINTS:

- A Pap test costs between \$60 and \$150.
- Pap tests are often paid for by private insurance.
- Medicare covers the cost of a Pap test once every 3 years.
- There are some community groups that give free Pap tests and some programs that charge you based on your ability to pay.
- For information about Medicare coverage, you can call the Medicare Hotline at 1-800-Medicare (1-800-633-4227).

How much
does a
Pap test
cost?



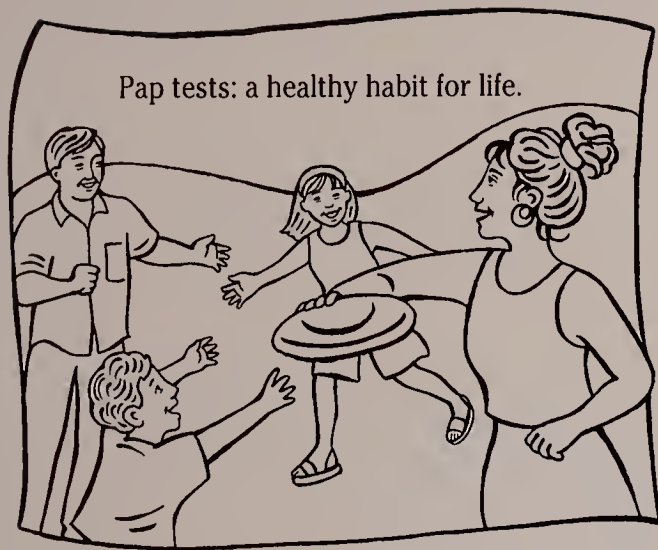


TALKING POINTS:

- Women age 18 or older should have Pap tests regularly. Women younger than 18 need a Pap test if they are or have been sexually active.
- It's also good to remember that Pap tests are still important even after you have reached menopause.
- Women age 65 or older need to have Pap tests too. Encourage your mother, grandmother, sisters, aunts, and friends to be screened.
- A woman who has had a hysterectomy (an operation to remove the uterus and cervix) should talk with her doctor about whether she needs to continue to have Pap tests.

Cervical cancer concerns all women.





TALKING POINTS:

- The Pap test gives you a chance to take control of your health.
- Remember your own health needs as you meet all the challenges of caring for your family.
- A Pap test is an important way to take care of yourself and your future.
- Do you think it is important for women to know about Pap tests? Why?

Pap tests: a healthy habit for life.





TALKING POINTS:

- Those of you who have had a Pap test are off to a good start.
- Remember, regular Pap tests are the best way to find cervical cancer early, when it's most treatable.
- Don't take chances with your health. Make an appointment for a Pap test soon.

Make an appointment
for a Pap test
soon.



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(1-800-422-6237)

TALKING POINTS:

- For more information about cervical cancer and Pap tests, call the National Cancer Institute's Cancer Information Service at 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237).
- Trained cancer information specialists will answer your questions in English or Spanish and send you free publications.
- CIS offices are open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., local time.



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September 1999