**CERVICAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH**

**JANUARY 2023 | QUICK FACTS**

* The American Cancer Society estimates that last year 160 Nevadans were diagnosed with cervical cancer and 60 died of the disease.
* Cervical cancer is one of the most preventable cancers through HPV vaccination and regular screening with Pap and HPV testing.
* Persistent infection with HPV (short for human papillomavirus) is responsible for nearly all cervical cancers, according to the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR).
* HPV is a common virus that infects many men, women and teens each year. Most of the time there are no symptoms and HPV infections will go away on their own. Some HPV types can linger, leading to cervical and other cancers.
* There are 13 types of HPV, and the vaccine Gardasil 9 protects against 9 of those HPV strains, greatly reducing the incidence of cervical cancer among vaccinated individuals.
* HPV vaccination, the best way to prevent cervical cancer, is recommended for all youth starting as early as age 9, or for teens and adults up to age 45 who didn’t start or finish the series. In Nevada, only 50.1% of teens ages 13-17 have been vaccinated for HPV.

**SCREENING / EARLY DETECTION**

* The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends a tiered screening approach for people with a cervix based on age:
	+ For those age 21-29 years, a Pap test every 3 years. A Pap test looks for precancerous or cancer cells on the cervix.
	+ For those age 30-65 years, a Pap test every 3 years OR a high-risk HPV test every 5 years OR co-testing with Pap and hrHPV every 5 years.
* In Nevada, about 83% of women ages 21-65 are up to date with cervical cancer screening. However, the percentage of women who are overdue for screening has increased over the past nearly two decades.
* Some disparities exist for cervical cancer screening, according to AACR:
	+ Compared to whites, incidence of cervical cancer is higher among all racial and ethnic minorities.
	+ Medically underserved and underscreened populations, including rural populations, account for more than 60% of cervical cancer diagnoses.
	+ Women who identify as lesbian are 22% less likely to be up to date with cervical cancer screening, and transgender individuals are 58% less likely to be screened.