



MEDIA RELEASE

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To: All Media
From: LaSalle County Health Department
717 Etna Road
Ottawa, IL 61350
Contact: Leslie Dougherty (ex 74314) or Jenny Barrie (ex. 74315)
Phone: (815) 433-3366

For Immediate Release

“January is Cervical Cancer Awareness Month”

OTTAWA, IL—In recognition of Cervical Cancer Awareness Month, the LaSalle County Health Department is urging female residents to get screened for cervical cancer. We encourage women 21 years of age and older to be tested for cervical cancer. The goal is to eradicate cervical cancer in Illinois by women taking charge and getting screened. During 2025 an estimated 13,360 women in the United States were diagnosed with cervical cancer, according to the State of Illinois. The most common age at diagnosis is 50 years old. Cervical cancer, when caught early, is nearly 100 percent curable.

The American Cancer Society (ACS) reports that between 60 and 80 percent of American women with newly diagnosed invasive cervical cancer have not had a Pap smear in the last five years and /or may have never had one. Cervical cancer is one of the most common types of cancer worldwide and one of the most preventable and treatable when detected early. In addition to increasing awareness of cervical cancer there are some preventative steps that women can take. Studies have shown, regular exercise, a healthy diet, routine screenings and getting the cervical cancer vaccine to help prevent Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), decreases the risk for cervical cancer. Licensed HPV vaccines for females and males are available. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends 11 or 12 year old girls and boys begin the HPV vaccine series. (Vaccination can begin at age 9.) The vaccination series must be completed by age 45. HPV vaccination is offered at LaSalle County Health Department by appointment and those who are interested in vaccination or want more information can call the Health Department.

The LaSalle County Health Department has an Illinois Breast and Cervical Cancer Program (IBCCP) available which can pay for Pap smear tests for LaSalle and Grundy County women, ages 21-64 who have no insurance or who have high deductibles regardless of income. We invite and encourage anyone who needs more information on cervical cancer and the importance of Pap Smear tests, the IBCCP program, or the cervical cancer vaccines to contact the Health Department at 815-433-3366 or visit our website at www.lasallecountyil.gov

