**HEALTH**

**It's time to take action on screening**

Tests are very quick and easy and our healthcare staff are very experienced in carrying them out and putting people at ease.

Reducing your risk

Screening reduces the number of women who develop or die from cervical cancer. Cervical screening increases your chance of survival. 

It is important to know what to tell your healthcare professional if you notice any changes in your body. 

Screening

Kamal Bahia, from the Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board, said: "The benefits of screening are clear. The sooner you screen, the better your chances of survival." 

Despite this, research from the National Cervical Screening Programme shows that fewer than half of women aged 25 to 64 years had been screened in the last five years.

Cervical screening rates vary across the UK, with rates ranging from 40% in the north of England to 60% in the south. 

"Cervical screening is not a test of your sex life," she said. "It is a test to check for signs of disease that could be present inside your body." 

"We know that many women are more likely to die from cervical cancer than from breast cancer because they do not get screened." 

"We want to encourage all women aged 25 to 64 years to get screened every two to three years." 

Screening is available at all GP surgeries, hospitals, and community centres.

In Berkshire, screening rates are lowest in the south of the county, where rates are as low as 35% in some areas.

"We are working with local partners to improve screening rates," she said. "We have set up a number of initiatives to encourage women to get screened, including a mobile unit that visits different centres around the county." 

"We also have a team of health advisors who are trained to talk to women about screening and answer any questions they may have." 

"If you are unsure about whether to get screened, or if you have any concerns, please speak to your GP." 

"It is important to remember that screening is not a test of fitness or health," she added. "It is a test of your health, and it is important to get screened regularly to protect your own health and the health of your loved ones." 

To find out more about cervical screening, visit the NHS website: [www.cancer.nhs.uk/cervical-screening](http://www.cancer.nhs.uk/cervical-screening).

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**Type 2 diabetes – you could be at more risk than you think**

Every two minutes someone somewhere in the world is diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes. 

It is a serious health condition that can severely impair your quality of life and increase your risk of developing other health problems. 

Type 2 diabetes is a common condition that affects millions of people worldwide. 

It is a chronic disease that develops over time and is usually not reversible. 

It is often referred to as "adult-onset diabetes" because it is more common in adults, but it can also affect children and teenagers. 

Type 2 diabetes occurs when your body becomes resistant to insulin or does not produce enough insulin to maintain blood sugar levels within a normal range. 

Insulin is a hormone that helps your body convert the sugar in the food you eat into energy that your body can use for energy. 

Insulin is produced by cells in the pancreas, a gland located below the stomach. 

When you eat, the pancreas releases insulin into the bloodstream to help your body use the sugar from the food you eat for energy. 

If you have Type 2 diabetes, your body may either not produce enough insulin or become resistant to insulin, causing your blood sugar levels to rise. 

Type 2 diabetes is often diagnosed through a blood test called a glycosylated hemoglobin (HbA1c) test. 

Your HbA1c level is measured in a blood sample taken from a finger or arm. The result is expressed as a percentage. 

A normal HbA1c level is generally considered to be below 5.7%, indicating that your blood sugar levels are within a healthy range. 

If your HbA1c level is above 6.5%, it suggests that you may have diabetes. 

If your HbA1c level is above 7%, it is considered to be high. 

Your HbA1c level is also used to monitor your progress and adjust your treatment plan. 

Treatment for Type 2 diabetes usually involves a combination of lifestyle changes, such as healthy eating and regular physical activity, and medication. 

Lifestyle changes can help to lower your blood sugar levels and improve your overall health. 

Medications can help to lower your blood sugar levels further and control your condition. 

It is important to work closely with your healthcare provider to develop a treatment plan that is right for you. 

Regular check-ups and monitoring of your blood sugar levels are essential for managing Type 2 diabetes. 

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