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breast cervical aaa bowel

screening information for
transgender service users

available in other
formats on request



www.screeningforlife.wales.nhs.uk

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Screening information for transgender service users

We (Public Health Wales, Screening Division) have developed this leaflet with Transgender Awareness Wales, FTM Wales, Unique Transgender Network and the NHS Centre for Equality and Human Rights.

The leaflet is for transgender service users and health advisors in Wales. It tells you about the adult screening programmes that are available in Wales and explains who we invite for screening.

You can find further general screening information and frequently asked questions for transgender service users on our website:

www.screeningforlife.wales.nhs.uk



About Breast Screening

Breast screening can find cancers when they are too small to see or feel. Finding and treating cancer early gives you the best chance of survival. Screening will miss some cancers, and some cancers cannot be cured.

Taking part in breast screening is **your** choice. You can find out more information from your GP. You can also contact Breast Test Wales by phone or visit the website:

www.breasttestwales.wales.nhs.uk

What is Breast Screening?

Breast screening is a free NHS test that is carried out at breast screening centres and at easy-to-access mobile breast screening units across Wales.



Who should have breast screening?

Breast Test Wales invites people who are eligible for routine breast screening. When you are due for breast screening, they will send you an invitation letter. You will receive your first invitation before your 53rd birthday.

Women aged 50 to 70 who are registered with a GP and live in Wales are invited for a breast X-ray every three years. Women over the age of 70 can ask for a breast screening appointment.

If you are an **FtM (female to male) /trans man aged 50 to 70 who is registered with a GP as male**, you will **not** be invited for breast screening. If you have not had chest reconstruction (top surgery) we suggest that you talk to your GP to arrange a referral to your local hospital to have a mammogram. If you have had chest reconstruction (top surgery) and you still have breast tissue, you will need to talk to your GP to arrange for a referral to your local hospital breast clinic.

If you are an **FtM/trans man aged 50 to 70 who is registered with a GP as female**, you will be routinely invited for breast screening. We recommend that you still have breast screening if you have not yet had a chest reconstruction (top surgery) or still have breast tissue. If you are worried about going to a breast clinic you can ring Breast Test Wales to arrange a more suitable appointment. We can arrange for you to have an appointment at the beginning or end of a clinic or perhaps at your local breast screening centre (this may involve more travelling).

If you are an **MtF (male to female) /trans woman aged 50 to 70 who is registered with a GP as female**, you will be invited for screening. Long-term hormone therapy can increase your risk of developing breast cancer so it is important that you go for breast screening when you are invited.

If you are an **MtF/trans woman aged 50 to 70 who is registered with a GP as male**, you will not be invited for breast screening. If you register as female with your GP, you will be routinely invited for breast screening.

If you have been on long-term hormone therapy you may be at increased risk of developing breast cancer and should go for screening when invited. If you are registered with your GP as male, you may want to speak to your GP about having a mammogram. This will be done at your local hospital.

If you are a transgender person, it is important that you or your GP lets Breast Test Wales know so that you are invited for screening correctly.

If you do not want to be invited for breast screening, you will need to contact your local breast screening office. They will explain how you can opt out of breast screening.

It is important that you feel that you are treated with dignity and respect at all times. Let us know if you would like your appointment at the beginning or end of a clinic or if you would prefer to be screened at your local breast screening centre and not at a mobile breast screening unit.

What does the test involve?

A breast X-ray called a mammogram is used to look for signs of cancer. Your breasts are pressed firmly between the plates of an X-ray machine for a few seconds. The pressure is needed to get good images and also reduce the radiation dose. Your test will be carried out by a specially trained female mammographer.

Some women find having a mammogram is uncomfortable and a few women may find it painful, but the discomfort should pass quickly.

If you are an **FtM/trans man** registered with a GP as female who has not had chest reconstruction (top surgery) and you wear a binder, you will need to remove this before having your mammogram. Private changing rooms will be available so that you can remove your binder just before having your mammogram. If you have any concerns about your appointment, you can contact your local breast screening office.

For most women the results are normal. If changes are seen on your X-ray, you will be recalled to an assessment clinic for more tests which will include a breast examination, more X-rays or ultrasound scans. You may also have a biopsy, where a small sample of tissue is taken from your breast with a needle.

Sometimes breast screening can pick up cancers that would never have caused harm, so women are treated for breast cancer that would never have been life-threatening.

What can I do to reduce my risk?

Take part in breast screening every three years, especially if you have taken hormone therapy and even if you have had a previous normal breast screening result.

Get to know how your breasts normally look and feel. If you notice any changes report them to your GP.

Speak to your GP if you are worried about breast cancer running in your family.

About Cervical Screening

Cervical screening aims to prevent cervical cancer from developing in the cervix at the neck of the womb.

It is important to go for your smear test as finding changes before they become cancer gives you the best chance of successful treatment.

Screening will not prevent all cancers and not all cancers can be cured.

Taking part in cervical screening is **your** choice. You can find out more information from your GP. You can also contact Cervical Screening Wales by phone or visit the website:

www.cervicalscreeningwales.wales.nhs.uk

What is Cervical Screening?

Cervical screening (a smear test) is a free NHS test that is carried out at your GP surgery or at some sexual-health clinics. The test looks for early changes in the cells at the neck of the womb.



Cervical Screening **Wales**
Sgrinio Serffigol **Cymru**

Who should have a smear test?

Cervical Screening Wales invite women for a smear test every three years from the age of 25 and every five years from the ages of 50 to 64.

If you are an **FtM/trans man aged 25 to 64 who is registered with a GP as male**, you will not be invited for your smear test. However, if you have **not** had a hysterectomy and still have a cervix, you should still have your smear test. This is especially important if you have had any abnormal smears in the past.

If you are an **FtM/trans man aged 25 to 64 who is registered with a GP as female**, you will automatically be invited for your smear test. We recommend that you still have your smear test if you have not yet had a hysterectomy and still have a cervix.

If you are an **MtF/trans woman aged 25 to 64 who is registered with a GP as female**, you will be invited for your smear test unless you or your GP have already told us about your change of gender. However, as you do not have a cervix, you will not need to be screened. If this applies to you, let Cervical Screening Wales know. We can update our records so you are not invited unnecessarily.

If you are an **MtF/trans woman aged 25 to 64 who is registered with a GP as male**, you will not be invited for a smear test and will not need to be screened.

If you are a transgender person it is important that you or your GP lets Cervical Screening Wales know so that you are invited for smear tests correctly. If you do not want to be invited for your smear test you should contact Cervical Screening Wales. They will be able to tell you how you can opt out of the cervical screening programme.

How will I be invited?

You will receive an invitation letter when you are due for your smear test, asking you to make an appointment.

If you are an **FtM/trans man** who is registered with a GP as a male, you will not automatically receive an invitation, but if you still have a cervix it is important that you have a smear test. If this applies to you, let your GP or practice nurse know so they can talk to you about having a smear test.

What does the test involve?

The nurse or doctor will put an instrument called a speculum into your vagina to help them see your cervix. They will then take a sample of cells with a soft brush.

If you are an **FtM/trans man** who has taken long-term testosterone, your smear test may be uncomfortable or painful. You may want to talk to your doctor or nurse about using a different size speculum and some extra lubrication.

We know this can be an anxious time for you as there may be physical changes taking place to your body and in particular to your genital area. It is important that you feel that you are treated with dignity and respect at all times. If you are worried about having your smear test, talk to your doctor or practice nurse or contact Cervical Screening Wales.

For most people the test results are normal. If cell changes are found you may need another smear test, or a hospital appointment at the colposcopy clinic where the neck of the womb is looked at in detail.

Cervical cancer is most often caused by a virus called human papilloma virus (HPV) which is passed on by sexual contact. It does not matter whether you are a virgin (this means you have never had sex) or not or whether you are in a different-sex or same-sex relationship, you should still come for your smear test when we invite you. If you are worried about your risk of developing cervical cancer you may want to speak to your GP or practice nurse.

What can I do to reduce my risk?

Go for your smear test every time you are invited, even if you have had a previous normal result. Let your GP or practice nurse know if you think you should be invited for a smear test.

Even if you have had the HPV vaccine you will still need to go for your smear test when invited.

Stop smoking, as smoking increases your risk of cervical cancer. If you have symptoms such as unusual vaginal discharge or bleeding, or pain during or after sex, go to the doctor even if you have had a normal smear result.

About AAA screening

The aorta is the main blood vessel that supplies blood to the body. Sometimes the wall of the aorta in the abdomen can become weak and stretch to form an AAA. There is a risk that an AAA may split or tear (rupture).

There is a high risk of dying from a ruptured AAA. Finding an aneurysm early gives you the best chance of treatment and survival.

AAA screening reduces your risk of dying from a ruptured AAA.

The screening test is not 100% accurate and surgery for AAA carries risks.

Taking part in AAA screening is **your** choice. You can find out more information about AAA screening from your GP. You can contact the Wales Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening Programme by phone or visit the website at:

www.aaascreening.wales.nhs.uk

What is abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) screening?

AAA screening is a free NHS test that is carried out in community hospitals, health clinics and GP practices across Wales. AAA screening involves a simple ultrasound scan to measure the abdominal aorta. Currently, this is the best way of finding an AAA.



Who should be screened?

Men aged 65 who are registered with a GP and live in Wales are invited for a one-off ultrasound screening test to check the size of their abdominal aorta.

Men over the age of 65 are not invited to attend for AAA screening at present. The Wales Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening Programme will introduce self-referrals for men over the age of 65 in the future.

Women are not invited for screening as evidence shows they are six times less likely to have an AAA.

If you are an **FtM/trans man aged 65 who is registered with a GP as male**, you will automatically be sent an appointment to attend for AAA screening. If the clinic location or appointment time is not suitable, you can contact your local screening office to change this. You will find your local screening office phone number on your invitation letter.

If you are an **FtM/trans man aged 65 who is registered with a GP as female**, you will not be invited for AAA screening as the Wales Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening Programme will not know about you.

If you are an **MtF/trans woman aged 65 who is registered with a GP as female**, you will not be invited for screening as the Wales Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening Programme will not know about you. However, you may want to be screened and will need to contact us to arrange a suitable appointment.

If you are an **MtF/trans woman aged 65 who is registered with a GP as male**, you will be invited for AAA screening.

The Wales Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening Programme holds clinics in community hospitals, health clinics and GP practices across Wales. If you are a transgender person it is important that you or your GP let the Wales Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening Programme know so that you are invited for screening correctly. If you do not want to be invited for AAA screening, you will need to let us know.

If you are not sure if you should be screened or not, contact your local screening office. You will find your local screening office number and more information about clinic locations on the Wales Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening Programme website.

What does the test involve?

The test is a simple ultrasound scan of your abdomen to measure the size of the aorta. Your screening appointment usually takes about 10 to 15 minutes.

The screener will check your personal details and ask for your consent (permission) to do the ultrasound scan.

You will not need to undress.

You will be asked to lie on your back and lift up your top. If you are wearing a binder, the screener may be able to do the scan without you having to remove this.

The ultrasound scan is usually painless but may be slightly uncomfortable as the screener may need to apply some pressure when using the ultrasound probe.

What does the test involve?

The screener will give you your results following your scan. It is not always possible to see your aorta at your screening test so you may be referred to hospital.

If your aorta is found to be bigger than normal, you will need regular scans to check if it is growing. Some people never need surgery for their AAA.

If your AAA is large you will be referred to a specialist team to discuss planned surgery. Large AAAs can be treated successfully with surgery.

What you can do to reduce your risk

Take part in AAA screening and follow-up when you are invited.

Stop smoking

Drink less alcohol

Maintain a healthy weight through a healthy diet and physical activity

About Bowel Screening

Bowel screening reduces your risk of dying from bowel cancer.

It is important to take part in bowel screening as you may feel well even if you have early bowel cancer. Finding cancer early gives you the best chance of survival.

Screening will miss some cancers, and some cancers cannot be cured.

Taking part in bowel screening is **your** choice. You can find out more information from your GP. You can also phone the Bowel Screening Wales free helpline on 0800 294 3370 or visit the website at:

www.bowelscreening.wales.nhs.uk

What is Bowel Screening?

Bowel screening is a free NHS test that you can do in your own home. The test looks for hidden blood in your bowel movements (also known as faeces, stools or poo).



Who should take part?

Unlike other screening programmes, **all** men and women aged 60 to 74 are invited to take part in bowel screening every two years.

What does the test involve?

A bowel screening test kit and information pack will be sent to you when you are due for screening.

You are asked to collect small samples of your stools (poo) and put them on the test kit provided.

Once you start, you will need to complete the test kit within 10 days and return it by post in the specially designed envelope.

The test looks for tiny amounts of blood in the sample which you may not be able to see and which could be a sign of bowel cancer. If you have lost your test kit, made a mistake or have any concerns about completing the test, you can contact the free helpline on **0800 294 3370** between 8am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.

If blood is found, you will be referred for further tests. This may involve you having a colonoscopy, which looks at the lining of the bowel using a flexible camera. If you are an **FtM trans man** or an **MtF trans woman** who has had gender-reassignment surgery, you may find having a colonoscopy more uncomfortable. You may want to talk to your specialist screening practitioner or your GP about this.

What you can do to reduce your risk

Take part in screening every two years, even if you have had a previous normal result.

Eat a high-fibre diet with plenty of fruit and vegetables, take regular physical exercise and stop smoking.

It is important to visit your GP if you notice blood in your stools (poo), a change in your bowel habit over a number of weeks or unexplained weight loss.

Bowel cancer can run in families. If you are worried about your risk speak to your GP.

Tell us what you think

It is important that **everyone** is treated with dignity and respect. If you feel that you have not been treated in this way or if you want to share with us your experience, good or bad, we would like to hear from you. Everything you tell us will be treated in the strictest confidence. You can find more information about how to contact us on our websites under the 'Raising a Concern' section.

Where can I find more information?

For more information or advice, visit the following websites:

Public Health Wales, Screening Division

www.screeningforlife.wales.nhs.uk

NHS Centre for Equality and Human Rights

www.equalityhumanrights.wales.nhs.uk

Transgender Awareness Wales (TAW)

www.tgawales.co.uk

Transgender in Wales

www.tiw.eng.unityproject.org.uk

Unique Transgender Network

www.uniquetg.org.uk

FTM Wales

www.ftmwales.co.uk

Stop Smoking Wales

www.stopsmokingwales.com

