

*“BCCC P has enabled women in our area to have Pap smears for the first time ever. We have diagnosed many cervical cancers, and these women are alive now.”*

New Mexico Community  
Health Center Physician

CHAPTER


# 5


# Resources for Information and Referral


# Support Groups and Health Care Information Services for Women with Cervical Cancer

Health care providers and patients have learned the value of mutual support among women with cancer. When someone with a serious illness feels frightened or depressed, it often helps to discuss these feelings with another person who has been through the same experience. In addition, many organizations offer practical advice on accessing health care information, cancer rehabilitation, family counseling, and diet and exercise information for women with cervical cancer.

## The American Cancer Society (ACS) Southwest Division

 Tel: (505) 260-2105

 WWW: <http://www.cancer.org/>


 Addr: 5800 Lomas Blvd., NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110


The ACS is a nonprofit, nationwide organization which supports research, conducts educational programs, and offers a variety of services to people with cancer and to their families. ACS helps women with cancer through various patient services and support groups.

- **Patient Services** include *Road to Recovery*, through which volunteers *transport* patients to and from treatment and help with *housing* for out-of-town patients.
- **Visiting and Support Groups** include *I Can Cope*, an educational program for patients, loved ones and friends.
- **RIG** (Resources, Information, and Guidance) is a community clearinghouse offering *resources*, *information*, and *guidance* to anyone contacting ACS with questions about cancer.

The ACS has field staff in counties throughout the state, although **not all programs are supported at all offices**. Call the Albuquerque office for information about services and support groups in your city or county.

## People Living Through Cancer (PLTC)

 Tel: (505) 242-3263

 Fax: (505) 242-6756


 Addr: 323 Eighth Street SW, Albuquerque, NM 87102


PLTC was founded by and for those coping with a cancer diagnosis or with the cancer of a friend or loved one. PLTC's cervical cancer resources include:


- *Peer support groups* for survivors and family members
- *One-to-one matching* with others who have had cervical cancer or have similar concerns
- *Living Through Cancer Journal*, a quarterly publication
- *Training* for those wishing to improve their skills at giving support
- *The largest cancer-related library* for health care consumers in New Mexico

PLTC includes Hispanic, American Indian, African American and Caucasian cervical cancer survivors serving their communities.

## The National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship (NCCS)

 Tel: (301) 650-8868

 Fax: (301) 565-9670

 Addr: 1010 Wayne Blvd., Silver Spring, MD 20910

The NCCS is a network of cancer survivors and their organizations across the United States. The NCCS helps cancer survivors and their families start local support groups or contact existing ones, sponsors a clearinghouse of national resources for support and information on life after a cancer diagnosis, provides advice to reduce cancer-based discrimination, and serves as a unified voice of cancer survivors. To find a local NCCS group, contact the national office at the above number.

# Additional National and State Resources

Health care providers may want more general information for themselves, their patients, and their patients' families. The services listed below will help them obtain what they need. Additional information is available from local libraries, bookstores and support groups.

The National Cancer Institute (NCI), one of the National Institutes of Health, supports the following services: the **Cancer Information Service**, **CancerFax**, **Physician Data Query**, and **CancerNet**. These and other resources are highlighted below.

## Cancer Information Service (CIS)


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

The CIS provides a nationwide telephone service for cancer patients and their families, the public and health care professionals. CIS can provide specific information in understandable language about particular types of cancer as well as information on state-of-the-art care and the availability of clinical trials.

Callers' questions are answered by Certified Information Specialists trained by the NCI. **Bilingual information specialists are available.** CIS offices can be reached anywhere in the country by dialing 1-800-422-6237, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. **local time.** Persons with TTY equipment can call 1-800-332-8615 for cancer information.

The CIS also coordinates state and regional outreach and cancer education efforts of the NCI.

## CancerFax

 Tel: (301) 402-5874

The NCI's CancerFax service provides up-to-date cancer treatment information including treatment and supportive care information summaries from the *Physician Data Query* database (see below). CancerFax is available in English and **Spanish** and operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call the phone number above to have information sent directly to a fax machine.


## Physician Data Query (PDQ)

The PDQ is a computer database which contains cancer information statements, listings of research studies (clinical trials), and directories of physicians and organizations involved in cancer care. PDQ was developed by the NCI and contains information statements on state-of-the-art cancer treatment, screening, and prevention; supportive care for cancer patients; and investigational and newly approved chemotherapy.

There are a number of ways people can obtain information from PDQ. *Cancer patients*, their *families*, and the *public* can call the Cancer Information Service (CIS) at 1-800-422-6237. CIS Information Specialists use PDQ information to answer callers' questions.


*Physicians* and *other health professionals* can obtain customized PDQ information through the PDQ Search Service (Tel: 1-800-345-3300, Fax: 1-800-380-1575). The e-mail address is: [pdqsearch@icic.nci.nih.gov](mailto:pdqsearch@icic.nci.nih.gov). In addition, the Health Sciences Library at the University of New Mexico has PDQ access. Selected PDQ materials are also available on the NCI's World Wide Web site: <http://www.icic.nci.nih.gov/>.


## CancerNet

 E-mail: [Cancernet@icic.nci.nih.gov](mailto:Cancernet@icic.nci.nih.gov)

CancerNet is a way to obtain PDQ information summaries and other NCI information via Internet and selected electronic information services. To use CancerNet, send a mail message to the address above. Enter the word "HELP" as the text of the message to receive materials in **English**; enter "SPANISH" to receive the information in **Spanish**.

## The New Mexico Breast & Cervical Cancer Detection and Control Program (B&CCP)

 Tel: (505) 841-8330


 Addr: 2329 Wisconsin NE, Suite A, Albuquerque, NM 87110

The B&CCP of the New Mexico Department of Health endeavors to increase screening, early detection, and follow-up care among low income, high risk women, *particularly minority and older women*. The program provides evaluation and follow-up and promotes increased public knowledge and awareness about breast and cervical cancer. Professional education is also an important component of the B&CCP.

*All counties* in New Mexico and the Indian Health Service (IHS) provide *free* cervical cancer screening for income- and age-eligible women. Unfortunately, available funding serves only a portion of the eligible New Mexico women.

For referral to a *local B&CCP provider*, call the Cancer Information Service at 1-800-422-6237. Information on the B&CCP is available on the World Wide Web at: <http://www.unm.edu/~bcnetwrk/>.

## The Cancer Research and Treatment Center (CRTC)

 Tel: (505) 272-4946

Statewide toll-free number: 1-800-432-6806

 Addr: 900 Camino de Salud, NE, Albuquerque, NM 87131-5306

The CRTC is New Mexico's only cancer center formally recognized by the NCI. The CRTC serves the entire state and the Navajo Nation. Breast and cervical cancer are the focus of much ongoing research and clinical activity at the CRTC.

The New Mexico Tumor Registry, a department of the CRTC, monitors cancer incidence rates statewide and serves as the NCI's resource for data on cancer incidence in American Indian and Hispanic populations.

# Professional Education

The following organizations are available to health care providers in search of professional education materials, practice guidelines and recommendations and educational resources for patients with special needs.

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Web Site</b>
American Academy of Family Physicians	(816) 333-9700	<a href="http://www.aafp.org">http://www.aafp.org</a>
American Association of Retired Persons	(703) 550-9708	<a href="http://info-ren.pitt.edu/universal-service/reply-comments/html/aarp.html">http://info-ren.pitt.edu/universal-service/reply-comments/html/aarp.html</a>
American Cancer Society	(800) 227-2345	<a href="http://www.cancer.org/">http://www.cancer.org/</a>
American College of Ob/Gyn	(202) 638-5577	<a href="http://www.surgeon.org/pages/contacts/acog.htm">http://www.surgeon.org/pages/contacts/acog.htm</a>
American College of Physicians	(215) 351-2400	<a href="http://www.acponline.org">http://www.acponline.org</a>
American Medical Association	(312) 464-5000	<a href="http://www.ama-assn.org">http://www.ama-assn.org</a>
American Medical Women's Association	(703) 838-0500	<a href="http://www.amwa-doc.org">http://www.amwa-doc.org</a>
American Nurses Association	(202) 554-4444	<a href="http://www.nursingworld.org">http://www.nursingworld.org</a>
Cancer Information Service	(800) 422-6237	<a href="http://web.kcr.uky.edu/cis/cis.html">http://web.kcr.uky.edu/cis/cis.html</a>
Coalition of Hispanic Health & Human Service Organizations	(202) 387-5000	<a href="http://www.cossmho.org/">http://www.cossmho.org/</a>
Food & Drug Administration	(800) 838-7715	<a href="http://www.fda.gov/">http://www.fda.gov/</a>
National Health Information Center	(800) 336-4797	<a href="http://nhic-nt.health.org/">http://nhic-nt.health.org/</a>
Native American Women's Health Education Resource Center	(605) 487-7072	<a href="http://www.rapidnetcom/urls/sdsites.html">http://www.rapidnetcom/urls/sdsites.html</a>
Office of Minority Health Resource Center	(800) 444-6472	<a href="http://www.omhrc.gov/">http://www.omhrc.gov/</a>

# Electronic Resource Directory

## Organization

## Electronic Address

American Cancer Society  
(ACS)

World Wide Web at: <http://www.cancer.org/>

Cancer FAQ Gopher

Internet at: [gopher://nysernet.org](http://gopher://nysernet.org)

CancerNet

e-mail at: [cancernet](mailto:cancernet)  
World Wide Web at: <http://cancernet.nci.nih.gov>

Cansearch  
(National Coalition  
for Cancer Survivorship)

World Wide Web at: <http://www.access.digex.net/~mkragen/index.html>

National Cancer Institute  
(NCI)

World Wide Web at: <http://cancernet.nci.nih.gov/occdocs/cis/cis.html>

NM B&CCP

World Wide Web at: <http://www.unm.edu/~bcnetwrk/>

OncoLink

World Wide Web at: <http://oncolink.upenn.edu/>

NCI Physician Data Query  
(PDQ)

e-mail at: [pdqsearch@icic.nci.nih.gov](mailto:pdqsearch@icic.nci.nih.gov)  
<http://cancernet.nci.nih.govpdq.html>

Women's Medical Health Page

World Wide Web at: <http://www.best.com/~sirlou/wmhp.html>

# Patient Education Page

The following page may be photocopied and used as patient education material. It describes patient preparation for a Pap examination and answers a few basic questions about cervical cancer and Pap smears. It may be appropriate for patients considering an examination or those scheduled or referred for an examination.

Space is provided for health care providers to include contact information for themselves and their practices.

## What is a Pap test?

It is a test that is used to find cancer of the cervix. If it is found early, it can be treated. The test is simple. The health care provider will wipe a brush on the cervix inside the vagina. This takes only a few seconds. Material taken from the cervix is then examined under a microscope to make sure it's healthy.

## Who needs a Pap test?

All women over 18 years old need a Pap test each year. Women under 18 years old who have had sex also need a Pap test each year. There is no upper age limit. Older women who have gone through the change of life (menopause), some women who have had a hysterectomy, and women who are not sexually active still need regular Pap tests.

## How do I get a Pap test?

You can contact your health care provider to schedule a Pap test. Or you can call the Cancer Information Service for help in finding someone who can perform a Pap test. Their number is 1-800-4-CANCER (800-422-6237).

You should schedule the Pap test before or after your period (not during your period). If you are not having periods, the exam can be done any time. During the 3 days before the test:

- Don't douche or put anything inside your vagina (including medications, tampons, or contraceptives).
- Don't have intercourse or other penetrative sex.

## Did You Know?

A Pap test can find cervical cancer early. If it's found early, it's easier to cure.



Cancer of the cervix may not be noticeable to you. Only a Pap test can find it early.



If you are over 18, or if you are younger than 18 and have had sex, you need a Pap test each year.

