

New Survey Finds Women Are Skipping Their OB/GYN Exams, Increasing Risks for Cervical Cancer

Women Are Seeking More Convenience and Less Discomfort in Testing Options

FRANKLIN LAKES, N.J., Jan. 9, 2025 /PRNewswire/ -- BD (Becton, Dickinson and Company) (NYSE: BDX), a leading global medical technology company, today announced the results of a new survey, revealing that 72% of women in the United States have delayed having a gynecology visit, with many highlighting the need for greater convenience, comfort and ease for this critical cervical cancer screening process.

According to the survey, conducted online by The Harris Poll among over 1,100 adult women in the U.S. in November 2024, despite 62% of women understanding that cervical cancer is preventable with regular screenings, 72% reported having delayed a gynecology visit, with 54% saying it was due to fear or discomfort and 49% citing scheduling-related challenges. Additionally, 50% indicated that they have no idea how often they are supposed to get screened for cervical cancer.

"The fact that women are skipping this potentially life-saving screening due to fear or scheduling makes it clear that the health industry needs to make the process more comfortable and convenient," said Dr. Jeff Andrews, a board-certified OB/GYN physician and vice president, Medical Affairs at BD. "Self-collection of vaginal samples reduces both the discomfort and time associated with a pelvic exam and is a critical step forward in cervical cancer screening."

Desire for Better Testing Options

The new study found that 81% of women want more comfortable and less invasive HPV/cervical cancer testing options versus a pelvic exam, with 73% indicating interest in using a self-collection vaginal swab test at the doctor's office in place of a doctor using a speculum to collect a sample from their cervix. Additionally, 74% of women are interested in having an option for self-collection at home.

The survey found that while 66% of women said that they are very or somewhat knowledgeable about what HPV is, 88% are not aware that Pap tests are not the most accurate test for detecting cervical cancer, and 81% are unaware that women aged 30-65 do not need a cervical cancer screening test every year. Current guidelines suggest screening every five years if previous results were normal.

"Medical research continues to be focused on the worthy goal of finding 'a cure for cancer,' but we're already able to help prevent cervical cancer today," said Nikos Pavlidis, worldwide president of BD Diagnostic Solutions. "The combination of vaccines, more precise HPV tests and self-collection will be important factors as we work to eliminate cervical cancer as a public health risk."

The BD Onclarity™ HPV Assay is FDA-approved for self-collection, and it also identifies more individual high-risk types or strains of HPV than any other test. Being able to identify more individual types of HPV means that clinicians can track those types across a patient's visits to more effectively manage high-risk cases and better guide follow-up for low-risk patients. This targeted approach helps ensure that women and people with a cervix receive the most appropriate care for their situation and avoid return visits to the doctor's office for invasive tests that may not be necessary.

Guidelines from a growing number of national and international agencies, including the World Health Organization (WHO), the American Cancer Society (ACS), the American Society for Coloscopy and Cervical Pathology (ASCCP) and the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force are recommending self-collection for HPV screening as well as tests that can identify more individual types of HPV.

According to the WHO, a woman dies of cervical cancer every two minutes. Cervical cancer is the fourth most common cancer in women worldwide, both in terms of incidence and deaths, but it is preventable with regular screening. The WHO aims to eliminate cervical cancer as a public health issue by 2030.

This survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll, on behalf of BD, among 1,108 U.S. women ages 18+ (November 25-27, 2024). The sampling precision of Harris online polls is measured by using a Bayesian credible interval. For this study, the full sample data is accurate to within +/- 2.5 percentage points using a 95% confidence level for the U.S. sample.

For the complete research method and additional survey results, please contact mela.sera@bd.com.

About BD

BD is one of the largest global medical technology companies in the world and is advancing the world of health by improving medical discovery, diagnostics and the delivery of care. The company supports the heroes on the frontlines of health care by developing innovative technology, services and solutions that help advance both clinical therapy for patients and clinical process for health care providers. BD and its more than 70,000 employees have a passion and commitment to help enhance the safety and efficiency of clinicians' care delivery process, enable laboratory scientists to accurately detect disease and advance researchers' capabilities to develop the next generation of diagnostics and therapeutics. BD has a presence in virtually every country and partners with organizations around the world to address some of the most challenging global health issues. By working in close collaboration with customers, BD can help enhance outcomes, lower costs, increase efficiencies, improve safety and expand access to health care. For more information on BD, please visit bd.com or connect with us on LinkedIn at www.linkedin.com/company/bd1/, X (formerly Twitter) [@BDandCo](https://twitter.com/BDandCo) or Instagram [@becton_dickinson](https://www.instagram.com/becton_dickinson)

Contacts:

Media

Mela Sera, APR
Associate Director, IDS Global
Communications
443.824.8012
Mela.Sera@bd.com

Investors

Adam Reiffe
Sr. Director, Investor
Relations
201.847.6927
Adam.Reiffe@bd.com

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