



# WOMEN'S HEALTH

## Learning About Cervical Cancer

(NAPSA)—Although cervical cancer screening has been the most successful cancer prevention campaign in United States' medical history, there is still a long way to go in the fight against the disease. According to a recent poll, 97 percent of women age 18 and over are unaware that the human papillomavirus (HPV) is the cause of cervical cancer, and seven percent say they haven't been told by their health-care provider that an HPV test is available. But now there is a new resource to help women manage their risk of cervical cancer: an interactive Web site, *TheHPVtest.com*. For those without Web access, a companion brochure is available by calling 877-HPV-FACT.

Medical specialists now know that when an HPV test is combined with a Pap in women 30 and older, the ability to identify women at risk increases to nearly 100 percent. Although the Pap "smear" has greatly reduced the development of cervical cancer over the past 60 years, it can miss abnormal cells while they are still in their pre-cancerous stage. The HPV test directly detects the virus that causes those abnormal cells in the first place.

Christine Baze, a cervical cancer survivor, musician and founder of *Popsmeat.org*, urges women to visit the site. "When I was diagnosed with cervical cancer, after having repeated Pap tests that appeared normal, I didn't know anything about HPV or the fact that the Pap by itself could miss women with abnormal cells," says Baze. "Today, women are lucky, because they can take charge of their own 'education'



**A new Web site and brochure may help women prevent cervical cancer.**

by visiting *TheHPVtest.com*."

The interactive site offers in-depth information about HPV and cervical cancer, as well as a number of interactive features including a "Myths vs. Facts Quiz," that allows women to check their HPV IQ, a tool that allows women to forward information to a friend or relative and HPV test and annual exam appointment reminders and much more. For those women who would rather sit back and listen, an interactive audio "tutorial" is available.

*TheHPVtest.com* was developed by a health-literacy expert and reviewed by a medical team for completeness and accuracy. A randomly selected group of women in the Washington, D.C., suburbs of Maryland was consulted prior to the site's launch to make sure it is user-friendly and meets the needs of a variety of age groups and educational backgrounds.

The HPV test is FDA-approved both for follow-up evaluation in women younger than age 30 whose Pap results are inconclusive and for routine screening (along with the Pap) in women age 30 and older.