



# News at the Q



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## National Health Observances for January

- Cervical Health Awareness Month
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Did you know that over 11,000 American women are diagnosed with cervical cancer every year? What about the fact that an estimated 79 million Americans are infected with the human papilloma virus (HPV), many of whom don't know they have the virus.

In honor of Cervical Health Awareness Month, let's take the time to unpack what it means to tend to cervical health. There's a lot that women can do to protect themselves from HPV, which is one of the main causes of cervical cancer. While most of us have heard of cervical health, many Americans are still uninformed about the details and risks surrounding cervical health.

### What is Cervical Cancer?

The cervix is the name for the lower, narrower portion of the uterus. It links the vagina to the upper section of the

uterus. Much like any other kinds of cancer, cervical cancer begins when cells start to grow out of control. In this instance, it's the cells lining the cervix that are affected. It is estimated that in 2017, there will be 12,820 new cases of invasive cervical cancer and 4,210 women will die of the disease.

Cervical cancer used to be one of the deadliest types of cancer for American women. However, over the past 40 years, thanks to a high uptake of Pap tests, this has ceased to be the case, with the death rate decreasing by over 50%. However, a recent study suggested that the death rate could be higher than previously thought, especially among black women. Previous calculations included women who had had their cervix surgically removed. These new figures take these women out of the equation, estimating that the death rate is more like 10.1 per 100,000 among black women, while among white women, it is 4.7 per 100,000. Although this latest study did not look into why there should be such a difference between races, it has been suggested that this could be down to problems with insurance coverage, difficulties in accessing Pap tests and not being able to follow up on abnormal test results.

The Pap (Papanicolaou) test is a quick and simple procedure that collects samples of cells from the cervix to test for any abnormalities, while the HPV test checks for the HPV virus that may cause cell changes. Though screening is demonstrably effective, 10% of American women in 2012 stated that they had not had any screening tests for at least five years. This means that every visit to your OB/GYN should be taken as a chance to discuss preventing cervical cancer.

This simple screening test detects changes in the cervix before cancer starts and can also spot cervical cancer early when it is easiest to treat and cure. Cervical pre-cancer is far more commonly diagnosed than invasive cervical cancer. In addition to better screening services, there is increased support available now, which also contributes to survival rates.

Cervical cancer most frequently occurs in women aged 20-50, although over 15% of cases are in women aged over 65. However, if you have been having Pap tests regularly, you are unlikely to get cervical cancer in your sixties.

<https://www.ciamedical.com/insights/cervical-health-awareness-month-can-proactive-cervical-health/?keyword=&gclid=CjwKCAiA>

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**“No one has a right to come into the world without leaving behind a distinct and legitimate reason for having passed through it.”**

George Washington Carver



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# National Glaucoma & Thyroid Awareness Month

## National Glaucoma Month

**C**urrently, more than 3 million people in the United States have glaucoma. The National Eye Institute projects this number will reach 4.2 million by 2030, a 58 percent increase.

Glaucoma often has no symptoms. In fact, half of all people with glaucoma don't know they have it, and if it's not detected and treated, they can lose their sight. That's why it is so important to reach those at higher risk for glaucoma: African Americans age 40 and older; everyone over age 60, especially Hispanics/Latinos; and anyone with a family history



of glaucoma. *Glaucoma* is the leading cause of *preventable* blindness. Moreover, among African American and Latino populations, glaucoma is more prevalent. Glaucoma is 6 to 8 times more common in African Americans than Caucasians.

Over 3 million Americans, and over 60 million people worldwide, have glaucoma. Experts estimate that half of them don't know they have it. Combined with our aging population, we can see an epidemic of blindness looming if we don't raise awareness about the importance of regular eye examinations to preserve vision.

The World Health Organization estimates that 4.5 million people worldwide are blind due to glaucoma. In the United States, approximately 120,000 are blind from glaucoma, account-

ing for 9% to 12% of all cases of blindness. Here are three ways you can help raise awareness:

Talk to friends and family about glaucoma.

If you have glaucoma, don't keep it a secret. Let your family members know and ... Get screened

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## National Thyroid Awareness Month

### How common is thyroid disease?

**T**hyroid disease is more common than diabetes or heart disease. Thyroid disease is a fact of life for as many as 30 million Americans – and more than half of those people remain undiagnosed. Women are five times more likely than men to suffer from hypothyroidism (when the gland is not producing enough thyroid hormone). Aging is just one risk factor for hypothyroidism.

### How important is my thyroid in my overall well-being?

The thyroid gland produces thyroid hormone, which controls virtually every cell, tissue and organ in the body. If your thyroid is not functioning properly, it can produce too much thyroid hormone, which causes the body's systems to speed up (hyperthyroidism); or it can create too little thyroid hormone, which causes the body's systems to



slow down (hypothyroidism).

Untreated thyroid disease may lead to elevated cholesterol levels and subsequent heart disease, as well as infertility and osteoporosis. Research also shows that there is a strong genetic link between thyroid disease and other autoimmune diseases, including types of diabetes, arthritis and anemia.

*Simply put, if your thyroid gland isn't working properly, neither are you.*

### How do you know if you have a thyroid problem?

First, you must understand how to recognize the symptoms and risk factors of thyroid disease. Since many symptoms may be hidden or mimic other diseases and conditions, the best way to know for sure is to ask your doctor for a TSH (thyroid-stimulating hormone) test, a simple blood test to verify your thyroid gland's condition. Also, take a minute and perform a self [Neck Check](#). And because thyroid disease often runs in families, examinations of your family members and a review of their medical histories may reveal other individuals with thyroid problems.

### What are some of the reasons to consider a Thyroid evaluation?

**Family history:** A familiar place to look for thyroid disorder signs and symptoms is your family tree. If you have a first-degree relative (a parent, sibling or child) with thyroid disease, you would benefit from thyroid evaluation. Women are much more likely to be thyroid patients than men; however, the gene pool runs through both.

**Prescription medications:** If you are taking Lithium or Amiodarone, you should consider a thyroid evaluation.

**Radiation therapy** to the head or neck: If you have had any of the following radiation therapies, you should consider a thyroid evaluation: radiation therapy for tonsils, radiation therapy for an enlarged thymus, or radiation therapy for acne.

<http://www.thyroidawareness.com/about-your->

**Outreach Events**

**No Events Scheduled**

**OS Quote Corner**

