



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact Information:

Carrie Field
(231) 347-5326
c.field@nwhealth.org



HEALTH
DEPARTMENT
of Northwest Michigan

Health Department of Northwest Michigan stresses importance of vaccination and screening during January, Cervical Cancer Awareness Month

CHARLEVOIX – This January, the Health Department of Northwest Michigan encourages every woman to recognize Cervical Cancer Awareness Month by scheduling a Well-Woman visit with her healthcare provider.

“Cervical cancer is a serious problem for women, and it’s still far too common,” said Joy Klooster, coordinator for the health department’s Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Navigation Program. “The good news is, we know how to prevent it. The Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine can prevent cervical and many other cancers in women and men. We also know that having annual Well-Woman checks can help screen for cervical cancer.”

Well-Woman visits are essential for keeping women healthy. Most insurance plans, including Medicaid and the Healthy Michigan Plan, cover Well-Woman visits. These visits are a chance for a woman’s healthcare provider to discuss things like breast and cervical cancer, immunization updates, and lifestyle habits. Every three to five years, a Well-Woman visit will include a Pap test to check for cervical cancer. The health department can help women get tested for breast and cervical cancer, even if they do not have insurance.

Children and young adults can get protected at well-visits or at the health department by getting vaccinated against HPV. The HPV vaccine is recommended for all girls and boys who are 11 or 12 years old, or for any older teens who have not yet received it. Young people can still get the vaccine until they are 26. The HPV vaccine protects against most strains of the virus that cause cervical cancer and genital warts, as well strains that cause other cancers.

“It’s incredible that we have a vaccine that can prevent cancer,” said Tricia Drenth, family health supervisor for the health department. Last year, 12,800 women were diagnosed with cervical cancer and over 4,200 died from the disease in the United States. As the new year begins, protect yourself and your family by scheduling appointments for vaccinations and wellness visits.

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is mandated by the Michigan Public Health Code to promote wellness, prevent disease, provide quality healthcare, address health problems of vulnerable populations, and protect the environment for the residents and visitors of Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego counties. For more information about cervical cancer or to get vaccinated or get a cancer screening at the health department, call (800) 432-4121.

###