



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Transylvania County  
Department of Public Health**

## **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**

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### **For Immediate Release**

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### **Transylvania County Department of Public Health Stresses the Importance of Screening and Prevention during Cervical Cancer Awareness Month**

Each year more than 11,000 American women are diagnosed with cervical cancer and over 4,000 of those women die from the condition. In North Carolina, more than 350 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer each year and over 100 die from the condition. The majority of these deaths occur in women over age 45. Almost all cervical cancer deaths could be prevented by a combination of routine Pap tests and appropriate follow-up of abnormal screening results.

January is Cervical Cancer Awareness Month, dedicated to encouraging women to take action and protect themselves in the New Year. The start of a new year is the time that many reflect on their health. To start the year right, we encourage women to contact their health care provider to schedule a Pap test to check for cervical cancer. This screening is an important part of a woman's health care routine, yet one that many overlook. It is important to remember that cervical cancer is a preventable disease.

Research has found several risk factors that may increase your chances of getting cervical cancer. The most important risk factor for cervical cancer is infection with human papillomavirus (HPV), a common sexually transmitted infection. Women are at increased risk of developing cervical cancer if they engage in sexual intercourse at an early age or have multiple sexual partners. Additionally, HIV or Chlamydia infection can contribute to the risk for cervical cancer. Women who smoke are twice as likely as non-smokers to develop cervical cancer.

If you are a woman that is sexually active or over age 21, talk to your health care provider about scheduling a cervical cancer screening today. Early detection is your best protection!

Many local health departments offer free cervical cancer screenings, education and referral services to eligible women through the NC Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCCP). Transylvania County Department of Public Health is the local BCCCP provider for services to women who meet eligibility requirements. Women who are uninsured or underinsured; are without Medicare Part B or Medicaid; are between the ages of 18 – 64; and have a household income at or below 250% of the federal poverty level are eligible for cervical screening services offered by the program. For further information about the services provided at the Transylvania County Department of Public Health, please call (828) 884-3135 or visit <http://health.transylvaniacounty.org/>. To learn more about the NC BCCCP, visit [www.bcccp.ncdhhs.gov](http://www.bcccp.ncdhhs.gov) or call 919-707-5300.