



# Dear John:

**Dear John,**

**I've been hearing a lot about HPV lately. What exactly is it, and what can I do to prevent it?**

Even though Human Papillomavirus (HPV) isn't a new virus, many people don't know about it. It can be transmitted sexually or through skin-to-skin contact. At least half of all people who have sex will contract HPV at some point in their lives, but many people don't have signs of HPV, & it may go away on its own without any health problems. Some strains of HPV (types 6, 11, 16, & 18) can cause genital warts or cervical cancer. Although there isn't a cure for HPV, there are treatment options for both genital warts & cervical cancer. Doctors can administer a test that can detect the virus even before there are any changes in the cervix. To reduce your chances of contracting HPV, practice safe sex (abstain, limit your # of sexual partners, choose a partner who hasn't had many partners, and/or use condoms). You can also ask your doctor about Gardasil, a 3 shot vaccine (without the virus in it) that protects against HPV types 6, 11, 16, & 18. It has been shown to be 95-100% effective, & the only known side effects are redness in the area of the shot & slight fever in some people.

<http://www.fda.gov/womens/getthefacts/hpv.html>

**Did You Know: A pedicure foot massage not only keeps your feet healthy & looking good, but it also acts as a great pain relieving therapy, relaxing your whole body & de-stressing your mind.**

<http://www.iloveindia.com/fitness/spa/foot-spa-massage.html>

## Ovarian Cysts

There are several types of ovarian cysts. The most common types fall under the functional cyst category, often forming during the normal menstrual cycle. In these cysts, the sac that holds eggs in the ovaries doesn't break open to release the egg. In some instances, the sac seals off after the egg is released, causing fluid to build up. Usually functional cysts dissolve within a few weeks to 3 months & most women have no symptoms. Functional cysts are almost never associated with cancer. However, there are several serious types of ovarian cysts. Endometriomas develop in women with endometriosis if uterine tissue attaches to the ovary. Cystadenomas are caused by cells growing on the outer surface of the ovary & are often filled with a watery fluid or thick, sticky gel. With Dermoid cysts, the cells in the ovary are able to make hair, teeth, & other growing tissues. Polycystic ovaries are formed

**Heart disease is the leading cause of death (40%) in African American women; their rate of heart disease is 72% higher than that of Caucasian women. Risk can be lowered by 82% through simple lifestyle changes: quit smoking, maintain a healthy weight, exercise, & monitor blood pressure & cholesterol levels.**

<http://www.exodusnews.com/HEALTH/Health043.htm>

Even though colorectal cancer is the 3rd leading cause of cancer deaths in the U.S., many women don't get a colonoscopy because they feel it's uncomfortable, embarrassing, & frightening. Because of this, 87% of women are willing to wait over a month for an exam with a female colonoscopist & 14% are willing to pay more.

[http://www.med.umich.edu/health-e\\_news/oct2005/women.html](http://www.med.umich.edu/health-e_news/oct2005/women.html)



**A health & wellness newsletter**

**For a good time call 4468!**  
**The Student Events Daily Hotline!**  
**Updated daily w/ complete info on events & activities**

Don't forget: Aerobics every Tues. & Thurs.

@ 4:15pm in the PAC with Dr. Bryant!



## **Wellness Tip #21: Breast Cancer Exams**

Examining your breasts is an important way to detect breast cancer in its earliest, most curable stage. The more you examine your breasts, the more you'll learn about them & the easier it will be for you to tell if something unusual has occurred. Get into the habit of doing a breast self exam once a month (a few days after your period ends) to familiarize yourself with how your breasts normally look & feel.

**Step One:** Look at your breasts in the mirror with your shoulders straight & arms at your hips. Check to see that your breasts are their usual size, shape, & color and that they are evenly shaped without visible distortion or swelling.

**Step Two:** Raise your arms and look for the same changes.

**Step Three:** While looking in the mirror, gently squeeze each nipple between your finger & thumb to check for discharge.

**Step Four:** Feel your breasts while lying down, using your right hand to feel your left breast & your left hand on your right breast. Using a firm, smooth touch, follow a pattern to be sure you cover your whole breast from top to bottom, side to side, collarbone to the top of your abdomen, & armpit to cleavage. Go from a soft touch & increase pressure to feel deeper tissue, all the way down to your ribcage.

**Step Five:** In the same manner as in step four, feel your breasts while you're standing or sitting.

Don't panic if you think you feel a lump. Most women have lumpy areas in their breasts, & 8 out of 10 breast lumps that are removed are non-cancerous. If you notice anything abnormal, see your doctor for a more thorough examination.

[http://www.breastcancer.org/dia\\_detec\\_exam\\_idx.html](http://www.breastcancer.org/dia_detec_exam_idx.html)

## **Night Safety Tips**

As the weather gets warm, you might feel inclined to walk around at night more. Be aware of people with unkind intentions. Trust your instincts at all times: if you feel wary, be wary. Walk with a friend. Stay in well-lit, highly trafficked areas. Be aware of your surroundings—don't listen to mp3 players. Keep your hands free. If you think someone is following, check by crossing the street. Let others know where you're going & when you'll return. Have your keys ready when approaching your front door. At bars, don't accept drinks from strangers. Use the buddy system—leave with the people you came with. Wear clothing and footwear that allows you to move quickly if necessary. Remember, if you feel unsafe, call Security for an escort: (540) 887-7000.

[www.mcmaster.ca/health/hwc/Newsletters/nov04/keeping\\_yourself\\_safe.htm](http://www.mcmaster.ca/health/hwc/Newsletters/nov04/keeping_yourself_safe.htm)

## **Upcoming March & April Events:**

- Mar 27, 29, & 31 Dance Practice for Age of Discovery Ball, 7—9pm in the PAC
- Mar 28—Apr 1 The Cherry Orchard @ 8pm, Deming (2pm Sunday)
- Mar 29 Spring Choir Concert @ 7:30pm, 1st Presbyterian Church
- Mar 31—Apr 1 Relay for Life, 6pm—7am @ the SAC Parking Lot
- Apr 5 SGA Installation @ 4:30pm, Francis Auditorium
- Apr 6 & 7 BPB Movie: Saw III @ 8pm, Francis Auditorium

## **Wellness Walk: Friday, March 30th, 1—5pm**

*A health fair begins the walk at 35 S. New Street! Complete the walk for a chance to win donated items from downtown business!*

## **Wellness Lecture: Smoking Cessation**

Wednesday, April 18th, 5-6pm; Health Center