Important Update
Cervical Screening Renewal
April 2017 update

Changes planned for 1 May 2017 have been delayed by the Government. It is important that women now due for cervical screening continue to have a Pap test.

To help reduce a delay in results, the Government will provide the following rebates:

From now until 1 May
Medicare rebate for Pap smear (slide). “Business as usual”.

1 May - 30 Nov: NEW!
Medicare rebate for EITHER Pap smear (slide) OR ThinPrep® (Liquid Based Cytology LBC).

Until 1 Dec
Medicare rebate for HPV testing is only available for follow-up of high grade cervical lesions or previously positive HPV tests.

From 1 Dec -
New CST program effective
Medicare rebate for primary HPV screening (+/-ThinPrep® (LBC) in some situations).
Medicare rebate for pap smear (slides) will cease.

Screening options

1. Pap smear
Until the new cervical screening program commences on 1 December, Melbourne Pathology will continue to offer high quality, Medicare rebatable Pap smear (slide) testing.

2. ThinPrep® (LBC)
Some referring doctors recommend that a liquid based cytology (LBC) sample is taken along with the Pap smear test.

From 1 May to 30 November, both options will be rebatable, but not when ordered together, so you may choose to send EITHER a Pap smear slide OR a ThinPrep® vial for cytology analysis. Only one per patient will be funded – not both.

The preferred screening option from 1 May is to send LBC.

3. HPV testing
Co-testing (LBC+HPV) can be offered to patients wanting the added reassurance of their HPV status, before the new program commences. If a ThinPrep® cytology sample is taken, the HPV test can be performed on the same vial and will generate a private fee.

Note: HPV testing continues to only be rebatable for follow-up and ‘test of cure’ until the new program commences.

The Management Guidelines are now available at the following link, but will not apply until 1 December 2017.

Melbourne Pathology will continue to provide you with relevant updates as they become available. For any queries related to the Renewal, contact our Cytology Department on 9287 7760.
Collection Using a Cervical Sampler

For the majority of pre-menopausal women, it is advisable to use the cervical sampler (broom-like device) alone.

The use of lubricant can interfere with pathology tests. If lubrication of the speculum is required, please use warm water. If additional lubrication is required, use only a small amount of water-soluble lubricant, avoiding the tip of the speculum.

1. **Label** the ThinPrep® vial with the patient’s given name, surname and date of birth.
   **Record** patient details and clinical history on the pathology request form.

2. **Visualise** the cervix and **Obtain** an adequate sample from the cervix by rotating the cervical sampler 3–5 times in the cervical os.

3. **Vigorously Rinse** the sampler immediately in the vial. The sampler should hit the base of the vial 5–10 times, splaying the bristles open.
   **DO NOT LEAVE THE HEAD OF THE SAMPLER IN THE VIAL.**

4. **Tighten** the cap of the vial. Place the vial and the request form in a specimen bag for transportation to the laboratory.