

Cervical Cancer Discussion Questions

1. Why might infection with HIV make someone more likely to get cervical cancer, a disease caused by a different virus (HPV)?
Hint: What does HIV infection do to those affected? How might this help another virus to establish a long term infection?
2. A woman who has never had pre-marital sex gets married. Years later, this woman has a Pap smear that indicates a pre-cancerous condition. Follow-up HPV tests confirm that she is infected with HPV.
 - a. How could this happen?
 - b. Is there anything she could she have done to prevent this from happening?
3. HPV vaccination as a moral issue:
 - a. What, if any, are the moral issues surrounding HPV vaccination?
 - b. Does vaccination send the 'wrong message' to young women? Young men?
 - c. Does the vaccination of a young woman mean that they can/will behave in a more reckless manner?
 - d. How/Why is vaccination against HPV different from vaccinations against other diseases, like polio?
4. A wide range of discussion questions can be developed that address wise dating/sexual activity decisions made by students.

HPV/STD activity

Because HPV is a sexually transmitted disease it is important to understand how this type of infection moves through a population.

The following exercise is designed to demonstrate this principle. The idea is to create a simulated sexual contact network and demonstrate how rapidly an STD is able to spread.

Supplies:

- a. Small, 3 oz, paper cups, one for each student.
- b. 1 bottle plain vinegar
- c. 1 bag plain (not self-rising) flour
- d. 1 box baking soda

Preparation:

A small amount (~1/2 tablespoon) of baking soda or flour is placed in each cup. Note that to make them look the same it may be necessary to add a small amount of flour to the cups containing baking soda. **Cups with baking soda represent individuals infected with a STD.

Creating the 'network'

Sexual encounters are simulated by transferring 1 tsp of powder from a cup into a 'partner's' cup and mixing the contents thoroughly. Both partners receive and give powder. New partners should be chosen for each successive round of exchanges.

Teaching note: It may be best to present the cups at the beginning of the class session. The exchanges can occur without any preparatory remarks. This may serve to limit undesirable student input during the process. The students may then be asked to provide suggestions as to the nature of the exchange.

Revealing the results.

To determine the 'infection status' of each person, teachers will add 1 oz of vinegar to each cup. Cups that fizz up represent infection of that individual.

