



## **RHTP Commends New Cervical Cancer Screening Recommendations by ACOG**

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Washington, D.C. – The Reproductive Health Technologies Project commends the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) for updating their recommendations for routine cervical cancer screenings, also known as Pap tests.

Based on a review of scientific evidence, ACOG now recommends women have their first Pap test at the age of 21, regardless of when first sexual intercourse occurs. In addition, women ages 21 to 30 are now advised to receive Pap tests every 2 years. After the age of 30, if a woman has had three consecutive negative (or normal) test results, it is suggested that she receive a Pap test once every three years.

“RHTP congratulates ACOG for continuing to evaluate the data and reducing exposure to unnecessary medical procedures that do not lead to improved women’s health and wellbeing,” says Kirsten Moore, President and CEO of the Reproductive Health Technologies Project (RHTP).

Although the cervical cancer-causing human papillomavirus (HPV) is more common among adolescents, the immune systems of adolescent women tend to clear the virus within a year or two. Early screenings of this group may result in unnecessary and potentially harmful treatment and interventions. Some treatments of these abnormalities can cause cervical damage, difficulties during childbirth, or increase the likelihood of premature births later in life.

ACOG also advises woman to continue to receive annual gynecological check-ups and other tests. Pelvic exam and STD screening, especially for chlamydia, gonorrhea, and HIV, are important aspects of regular health care.

“Although we now know a woman does not need to receive a Pap test every year, ongoing cervical cancer screening is vital. In addition, data released by CDC earlier this week on rising STD rates, especially in Southern states, underscore the need for health care reform. Every woman deserves access to comprehensive reproductive health care so she can take care of herself and her family.”

For more information, please visit: <http://www.rhtp.org>

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