

Argumentative essay on cervical cancer

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Shelley Miller Dr. Ashli Dykes Composition 1 12 November 2012 Cervical Cancer Cervical cancer is a cancer that starts in the cervix, the lower part of the uterus, which opens at the top of the vagina. It occurs when abnormal cells on the cervix grow out of control. Cervical cancer can often be successfully treated when it is found early. It is usually found at a very early stage through a pap-test. Cervical cancer is the third most common type of cancer in the world. Routine pap-smears, in the United States, have narrowed down the disease, unlike other countries.

This disease starts in the cells on the surface of the cervix. Of the two types of cells, on the surface of the cervix, squamous and columnar, the majority of cervical cancers form on the squamous cells. It is a slow developing disease. It starts out as dysplasia, a pre-cancerous condition. Normally a pap-smear can detect the pre-cancerous condition. If left undetected, over years, a pre-cancerous condition can turn into cervical cancer. In most circumstances, women who have routine pap-smears normally do not get cervical cancer (PubMedHealth).

The most recent statistic numbers available are from the year 2008. There were 12, 410 women in the United States diagnosed with cervical cancer. Out of all those women, 4, 008 of them died from the disease. These incidents and death counts cover approximately 100% of the U. S. population in 2008. The famous Greek physician, Hippocrates, was the first to write about cervical cancer in 400BCE; although, he could identify the disease, he declared it incurable. In the following twenty-five centuries, many women died from this disease. Dr. Hinselmann invented the colposcope in 1925.

The colposcope allowed doctors to examine the cervix more closely, which allowed them to check for abnormalities. The closer examinations meant that some cancers were found in time for surgery to be successful. The pap-smear was named after Georgios Papanikolaou, who in 1928, found that he could identify abnormal cells taken from the surface of the cervix. Since its invention in 1943, this procedure has saved many lives all around the world. It's estimated that if a woman's cervical cancer is diagnosed by a Pap smear, rather than before symptoms appear, she has a 92% chance of a full recovery.

If she waits for signs of disease before going to the doctor, her chance of survival drops to 66%. More than 70% of women who die from cervical cancer have not had a Pap smear within the last five years. It's recommended that all women between the ages of 21 and 60 have a smear test every three to five years, although if a woman has never been sexually active, the test is not necessary. Epidemiologists, in the early twentieth century, noticed that cervical cancer shared many characteristics of a STD (sexually transmitted disease) (Yukozimo).

Although there are normally no signs of early stages in cervical cancer, the symptoms that may occur are similar to those of a STD. Symptoms of cervical cancer are abnormal vaginal bleeding, continuous vaginal discharge, and/or abnormal periods. Abnormal vaginal bleeding can or may include between periods, after intercourse, or after menopause. Periods may be abnormal if they become heavier or last longer than usual. Vaginal discharge may be " pale, watery, pink, brown, bloody, or foul-smelling. " Another easy to recognize symptom, of early stages, is pain during intercourse.

Patients with cervical cancer generally start having problems when it advances and spreads to nearby tissue. It may spread to the bladder, lungs, intestines, and liver. If the cancer spreads, the symptoms become more noticeable and serious. The symptoms of advanced cervical cancer includes back pain, bone pain or fractures, fatigue, difficulty urinating, pain when urinating or blood in urine, as well as, leaking of urine or feces from vagina, leg pain, loss of weight and appetite, pelvic pain, single swollen leg, and/or weight loss (PubMed Health).

Other symptoms of advanced cervical cancer are diarrhea, or pain or bleeding from the rectum upon defecation, fatigue, and general feeling of illness, and a swollen abdomen, nausea, vomiting, and constipation. (WebM. D.) Most cervical cancer cases start out as HPV (Human papilloma virus), which is a common virus spread through sexual intercourse. There are many types of HPV; however, not all types lead to cervical cancer. Increased risks for cervical cancer can be determined by a woman's sexual habits.

Having sex at a young age, multiple sex partners, or having multiple partners who participate in high risk sexual activities are all examples of risky sexual habits. Other risk factors include poor economic statue, not getting the HPV vaccine, weakened immune system, and being born to a mother who took the DES drug (diethylstilbestrol, which prevented miscarriages), while pregnant. There are many different types of treatment for cervical cancer but it depends on several things like what stage the cancer is in, size and/or shape of the tumor, the age of a woman, her general health, and her desire of having more children later on.

Destroying or removing the pancreas or cancerous tissue can cure cervical cancer in its early stages. There are other types of treatments, involving surgery, which can be done without destroying the uterus or damaging the cervix so that, in the future, a woman can have other children. LEEP (loop electrosurgical excision procedure), cryotherapy, or laser therapy, are the types of surgeries that can be done; however, they are only effective if the cancer is caught at an early stage. Leep uses electricity to remove abnormal tissue, cryotherapy freezes abnormal cells, and laser therapy uses light to burn abnormal cells.

A hysterectomy is a more intense surgery used to cure cervical cancer. It works by removing the uterus but not the ovaries. This surgery is usually performed in result of multiple failed LEEP procedures. There are more advanced treatments for those whose cervical cancer is later detected. These procedures are radical hysterectomy and pelvic exenteration. A radical hysterectomy consists of removing the uterus as well as the surrounding tissues, which include the lymph nodes and the upper part of the vagina.

The pelvic exenteration is an extreme type of surgery in which all of the organs of the pelvis, including the bladder and rectum, are removed. In some cases when the cancer has spread beyond the pelvis or has returned, forms of radiation therapy are used. There are two forms of radiation therapy used: internal and external. Internal radiation therapy uses a device filled with radioactive material, which is placed inside the woman's vagina next to the cervical cancer. The device is removed when she goes home. External

radiation therapy beams radiation from a large machine onto the body where the cancer is located.

It is similar to an x-ray (PubMed Health) In conclusion, cervical cancer is a serious condition in which the medical field has been experimenting with and developing cures for throughout the years. The advances made in this study, since it was discovered in 1943, are remarkable. Due to the developments of tests and treatments for this disease, the amount of women who die from it, has decreased greatly. Hopefully in the years to come, researchers will find a way to make cervical cancer extinct. Work Cited " Cervical Cancer. " PubMed Health. A. D. A. M. , Inc. 2012.

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