

Conventional, classic PAP smear test

PAP tests are named after Dr. Papanicolaou (PAP), a Greek physician who developed the smear and stain techniques.

- Using a lead pencil, write the patient's details on the frosted end of the glass slide.
- Sample the surface cells from the cervix and remove them with the sampling devices.
- Quickly transfer the samples from the spatula and the brush in 2 to 3 seconds onto the glass slide by rolling the brush and rotating the spatula to obtain thin and even smears.
- Fix the material immediately by spraying a fixative coat onto the specimen from a distance of about 20 cm to cover the smear thoroughly with a fixative coating; **alternatively**, fix the cellular sample in 96% ethanol: Drop the slide immediately into a vial with alcohol and fix for 20 minutes.
- Air-dry glass slide for 10 to 20 minutes before sending it to the laboratory.
- Cellular sampling devices include spatulas and various cervical brushes. Endocervical brushes can improve the cellular yield from the endocervical canal and transformation zone.
- Sampling devices can be used in combination when taking specimens.

Liquid-Based Cytology (LBC)

- Liquid-based (LBC), gynecologic smear test (SurePath BD, FDA-approved).
- Label the vial with the patient's details and/or attach the label/barcode label.
- Use the cervical broom to collect the material as for a conventional smear.
- Depending on the type of device used, immediately snap off or break off the tip of the broom, dropping it into the transport medium in the larger opening of the LBC container.
- Place cap on container and tighten firmly.
- The smears should contain sufficient epithelial squamous cells and, if possible, cells from the endocervical canal and/or the transformation zone.
- Fill in request form, package and submit specimen to laboratory.

Advantages:

- Smear and fixation procedures are no longer required.
- Standardised preparation, standardised staining, and automated pre-screening with FocalPoint.
- If required, PCR-based tests can be run simultaneously or subsequently on residual cellular material to screen for HPV, chlamydia, HSV-1/HSV-2, and gonococcal infections.
- If desired, immunocytochemical staining with CINtecPLUS can be performed to identify transforming high-risk HPV infections.