

Lesotho

Human Papillomavirus and Related Cancers, Fact Sheet 2023 (2023-03-10)



I. Key data on HPV and HPV-related cancers



Lesotho has a population of 771,897 women ages 15 years and older who are at risk of developing cervical cancer. Current estimates indicate that every year 541 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer and 362 die from the disease. Cervical cancer ranks as the 1st most frequent cancer among women in Lesotho and the 1st most frequent cancer among women between 15 and 44

years of age. Data is not yet available on the HPV burden in the general population of Lesotho. However, in Southern Africa, the region Lesotho belongs to, about 3.2% of women in the general population are estimated to harbour cervical HPV-16/18 infection at a given time, and 62.5% of invasive cervical cancers are attributed to HPVs 16 or 18.

Table 1. Crude incidence rates of HPV-related cancers

	Male	Female
Cervical cancer	-	49.8
Anal cancer	0.19	0.28
Vulva cancer	-	2.58
Vaginal cancer	-	0.37
Penile cancer	2.18	-
Oropharyngeal cancer	0.28	0
Oral cavity cancer	1.80	0.92
Laryngeal cancer	1.14	0

Table 2. Burden of cervical cancer

	Incidence	Mortality
Annual number of new cases/deaths	541	362
Crude rate	49.8	33.4
Age-standardized rate	56.8	38.7
Cumulative risk 0-74 years (%)	5.74	4.18
Ranking of cervical cancer (all years)	1st	1st
Ranking of cervical cancer (15-44 years)	1st	1st

Table 3. Burden of cervical HPV infection Lesotho

	No. Tested	% (95% CI)
HPV 16/18 prevalence:		
Normal cytology	-	-
Low-grade cervical lesions	-	-
High-grade cervical lesions	-	-
Cervical cancer	-	-

Figure 1. Comparison of the ten most frequent HPV oncogenic types in Lesotho among women with and without cervical lesions



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II. Complementary data on cervical cancer prevention

Table 4. Factors contributing to cervical cancer (co-factors)

Smoking prevalence (%) [95% UI], women	0.4 [0.2-0.7]
Total fertility rate (live births per women)	3.0
Hormonal contraception use (%)	14.2
HIV prevalence (%) [95% UI] (15-49 years)	28.8 [26.2-30.5]

Table 5. Sexual behaviour

MEN	
Percentage of 15-year-old who have had sexual intercourse	26.0
Range of median age at first sexual intercourse	17.1 - 22.6
WOMEN	
Percentage of 15-year-old who have had sexual intercourse	9.0
Range of median age at first sexual intercourse	18.2 - 19.0

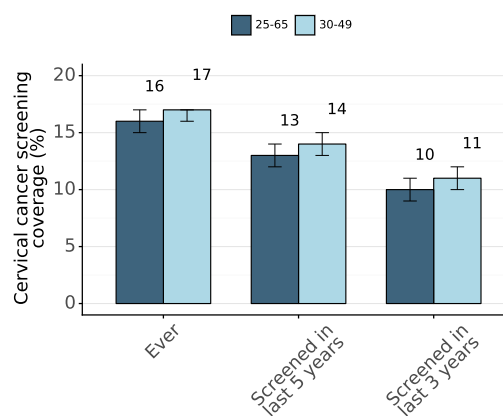
Table 6. HPV vaccine introduction

Females	
HPV vaccination programme	Not Available/Not Introduced
Year of introduction	-
Year of estimation	-
HPV coverage – first dose (%)	-
HPV coverage – last dose (%)	-
Males	
HPV vaccination programme	Not Available/Not Introduced
Year of introduction	-
Year of estimation	-
HPV coverage – first dose (%)	-
HPV coverage – last dose (%)	-

Table 7. Cervical screening practices and recommendations

Existence of official national recommendations	No
Starting year of recommendations	-
Active invitation to screening	-
Screening ages (years), primary screening test used, and screening interval or frequency of screenings	-

Figure 2. Estimated coverage of cervical cancer screening in Lesotho*



* Estimated coverage and 95% confidence interval in 2019

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