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## HPV HOME TESTS COULD SPOT CANCER RISK

HPV (human papillomavirus) self-testing is as effective as tests carried out by doctors, according to research from Sweden.<sup>1</sup> Simple HPV home tests could complement existing screening programmes, and identify more women at risk of cervical cancer.

HPV is also a cause of oropharyngeal cancers and cancers of the anus, vulva and penis.

Sweden, like the UK, has a system of regular gynaecological smear tests, which has halved the number of cases of cervical cancer. Most of the patients who die from the disease are either above the screening age, or part of the 20% who fail to attend their screenings. The figures are similar in other countries with equivalent screening programmes.

Study author Dr Lotten Darlin, of Lund University, said: 'We are usually able to cure cases of cancer that are identified through smear tests. For those women who have not been for smear tests, the cancer has progressed considerably further by the time

it is diagnosed. It is these women who are at risk of dying from the disease.'

Dr Darlin investigated the possibility of home testing, but the testing kits available were either complicated or expensive. Her team then developed their own test comprising a cotton bud and a test tube. The test is sent off to a lab, where it has been shown to produce just as clear results as HPV tests taken by a doctor.

In one study, self-testing kits were sent to 1,000 women who had not had a smear test for over nine years. Fifteen percent of them used the test and sent in samples for analysis.

Dr Darlin believes that the simple self-testing kit could also be used in countries that do not have a programme of regular cervical smear tests.

1. Darlin L. *Cervical cancer: studies on prevention and treatment*. Faculty of Medicine, Lund University, Sweden: Doctoral Dissertation, 2013.

## Diary

**10-12 April 2014**

### **British Dental Conference & Exhibition 2014**

Venue: Manchester Central Convention Complex, Manchester  
[www.bda.org/conference](http://www.bda.org/conference)

**11 April 2014**

### **The 5th DCP Symposium: Skill Mix for the Dental Team**

Dental Postgraduate Section of the Wales Deanery in collaboration with the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh

Venue: Marriott Hotel, Cardiff  
 The event costs £30, including lunch and six hours of verifiable CPD. For further information email [liddingtonke@cf.ac.uk](mailto:liddingtonke@cf.ac.uk).

**17 May 2014**

### **Core CPD for Dental Care Professionals**

Covers oral cancer: improving early detection; safeguarding children; radiography; legal and ethical issues; disinfection and

decontamination; and medical emergencies.

Location: Birmingham  
 The event costs £49 and includes lunch and five hours of verifiable CPD. For further information email [info@cpd4dentalnurses.co.uk](mailto:info@cpd4dentalnurses.co.uk) or [info@cpd4dentalhygienists.co.uk](mailto:info@cpd4dentalhygienists.co.uk).

**31 May 2014**

### **The Management of Snoring and Sleep Apnoea in Dental Practice – an introductory course**

Venue: Clinical Education Centre, Glenfield Hospital, Leicester  
 Email: [louisedlb@aol.com](mailto:louisedlb@aol.com) or visit [www.dentalsleepmed.org.uk](http://www.dentalsleepmed.org.uk) for more information.

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