

# Symptoms of cervical cancer



Getting to know your body and the symptoms of cervical cancer will help you understand whether anything is unusual for you. Symptoms aren't usually caused by cervical cancer but, if you have any, it's important to contact your GP.

## Vaginal bleeding that is unusual for you

Unusual vaginal bleeding means bleeding at a time when you usually don't. It could happen between periods, during or after sex, or after the menopause. There are many reasons for unusual vaginal bleeding that aren't cervical cancer, including hormonal contraception and cervical ectropion, but it's still important to get advice from your GP.

## Changes to vaginal discharge

Vaginal discharge is a fluid (mucus) that cleans and protects the vagina. It may change for lots of reasons, such as an infection or changing hormones. But it's good to be aware of any changes, including the discharge looking or smelling different, and tell your GP.

## Pain or discomfort during sex

You may find sex painful or uncomfortable, which is sometimes called dyspareunia (pronounced dis-pa-roo-nee-uh). Sex may be painful for lots of reasons that aren't related to cervical cancer. There are things that may help, such as using more lubrication or seeing a counsellor that specialises in sex therapy. Your GP can give advice about these and help to reassure you.

## Pain in your lower back or between your hipbones

You might feel pain in your lower back or between your hipbones (pelvis) for a reason, like pulling a muscle or having a period. It's a good idea to tell your GP if there's no obvious reason for the pain, it's affecting your day-to-day life or it lasts for 2 to 3 weeks or longer.

## How we can help

If you have any symptoms, it's important to speak with your GP who will ask you some questions and may examine you. We're here to support you too! Give our free Helpline a call on **0808 802 8000** or visit [jostrust.org.uk/support](https://jostrust.org.uk/support) to find other ways we can help.

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