



James E. Zelko
Executive Director

Main Office
501 Ella Avenue
Joliet, IL 60433
Ph 815.727.8480
Fz 815.727.8484
TDD 815.727.8690

Eastern Branch Office
44 Towncenter
University Park, IL 60466
Ph 815.727.8803
Ph 708.534.0800
Fz 708.534.3455

Northern Branch Office
323 Quadrangle Dr.
Bolingbrook, IL 60440
Ph 630.679.7000
Fz 630.679.7015

Youth Services
407 W. Jefferson St.
Joliet, IL 60435
Ph 815.727.5065
Fz 815.727.0136

www.willcountyhealth.org

WILL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT & COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

Will County Health Department
501 Ella Avenue
Joliet, IL 60433
Contact Person: Vic Reato
(815) 727-5088
January 11, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HEALTH DEPARTMENT URGES CERVICAL CANCER AWARENESS

JOLIET – January is National Cervical Cancer Awareness Month, and the Will County Health Department reminds area women that regular screening and early detection is their best protection.

Cervical cancer strikes at least 15,000 U.S. women every year and kills more than 5,000 annually. An annual pap test can detect abnormalities that may ultimately produce invasive cancer, but many women choose to ignore readily available screening which could be a life saver.

According to the American Cancer Society, nearly 80 percent of women with newly diagnosed invasive cervical cancer have not had a pap test in the previous five years. The Health Department urges all adult women, particularly those who have not been tested during the previous three years, to consult a health care professional concerning the advisability of a pelvic exam and Pap test.

The Will County Community Health Center, a division of the Will County Health Department, reminds area residents that the Illinois Breast and Cervical Cancer Program (IBCCP) offers free pelvic exams, pap tests, mammograms and breast exams to eligible county women. The program, funded cooperatively by the National Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Illinois Department of Public Health, has screened more than 60,000 Illinois women since 1995.

Women must live in Illinois, have limited income and must not be covered by health insurance. Will County women must be between the ages of 40 and 64 to be eligible for pelvic exams and pap tests. Younger symptomatic women who meet the financial and insurance guidelines are considered on a case by case basis.

The IBCCP is open to women of all races, but low-income African-American women between the ages of 50 and 64 are a priority focus. Recent studies suggest African-American women face an increased risk of breast and cervical cancer mortality.

A woman enrolled in the IBCCP is eligible to receive treatment benefits from the state's Medicaid system if she is diagnosed with cancer through screening and testing made available by the program. Medicaid services are managed by the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services.

For more information about the IBCCP, telephone 815-727-8670, or 888-522-1282.