January Is Cervical Cancer Awareness Month, Tips From Mount Sinai

Mount Sinai Experts Weigh In On Diagnosis, Prevention, Risk & Treatment Options

NEW YORK (PRWEB) January 04, 2019 -- Nearly 500,000 women worldwide will be diagnosed with cervical cancer this year. Today, almost all cervical cancers are caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV), a common virus that can be passed from one person to another, primarily through sexual contact. Cervical cancer is the only gynecologic cancer for which there is a screening test, the Pap test, that can find signs of cancer early, when treatment is generally most effective.

January is Cervical Cancer Awareness Month and Mount Sinai Health System experts are sharing tips on diagnosis, prevention, risk and treatment options.

Experts Available for Interview:
• Stephanie V. Blank, MD, Director, Division of Gynecologic Oncology for the Mount Sinai Health System, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai
• Valentin Kolev, MD, Assistant Professor, Division of Gynecologic Oncology for the Mount Sinai Health System, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai

According to Dr. Blank, cervical cancer can be prevented. “Between the HPV vaccine and improved screening options which allow us to detect abnormalities before they turn into cancer, we have the tools to eradicate cervical cancer,” Blank said. “It is crucially important that we use these tools properly.”

Tests to Diagnose Cervical Cancer
- The HPV test detects the virus that can cause these cell changes.
- The Pap test looks for pre-cancer or cell changes on the cervix that may become cervical cancer if left untreated.

HPV Prevention
You can lower your risk of cervical cancer by lowering your risk of HPV infection by:
- Getting vaccinated: The HPV vaccine can prevent infection by the types of HPV that cause most cervical cancers.
- Avoiding sexual activity: HPV infection of the cervix is the most common cause of cervical cancer. Avoiding sexual activity decreases your risk of HPV.
- Using barrier protection or spermicidal gels: Some methods used to prevent sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) decrease your risk of HPV infection. The use of barrier methods of birth control, such as a condom or spermicide, helps protect against HPV infection.

Other Risks of Cervical Cancer
- Smoking
- Multiple sexual partners
- Using birth control pills for 5 years or more
- Secondhand smoke, although the risk is lower than active smoking

Symptoms
Cervical cancer may not cause signs and symptoms early on. Advanced cervical cancer, however, may cause
symptoms such as:
- Abnormal vaginal bleeding and unusual discharge
- Frequent or urgent need to urinate
- Pelvic pain and fatigue
- Unexplained weight loss
- Pain during intercourse

Treatment
- Surgery: Removal of cancer tissue.
- Chemotherapy: Uses drugs to stop the growth of cancer cells, either by killing the cells or by stopping them from dividing.
- Radiation: Uses high-energy X-rays or other types of radiation to kill cancer cells or keep them from growing.
- Immunotherapy: Harnesses the body’s immune system to fight the cancer

*Patients are also available for interview

About the Mount Sinai Health System

The Mount Sinai Health System is New York City's largest integrated delivery system encompassing (with the addition of South Nassau Communities Hospital) eight hospital campuses, a leading medical school, and a vast network of ambulatory practices throughout the greater New York region. Mount Sinai's vision is to produce the safest care, the highest quality, the highest satisfaction, the best access and the best value of any health system in the nation. The Health System includes approximately 7,480 primary and specialty care physicians; 11 joint-venture ambulatory surgery centers; more than 410 ambulatory practices throughout the five boroughs of New York City, Westchester, Long Island, and Florida; and 31 affiliated community health centers. The Icahn School of Medicine is one of three medical schools that have earned distinction by multiple indicators: ranked in the top 20 by U.S. News & World Report's "Best Medical Schools", aligned with a U.S. News & World Report's "Honor Roll" Hospital, No. 12 in the nation for National Institutes of Health funding, and among the top 10 most innovative research institutions as ranked by the journal Nature in its Nature Innovation Index. This reflects a special level of excellence in education, clinical practice, and research. The Mount Sinai Hospital is ranked No. 18 on U.S. News & World Report's "Honor Roll" of top U.S. hospitals; it is one of the nation's top 20 hospitals in Cardiology/Heart Surgery, Gastroenterology/GI Surgery, Geriatrics, Nephrology, and Neurology/Neurosurgery, and in the top 50 in six other specialties in the 2018-2019 "Best Hospitals" issue. Mount Sinai's Kravis Children's Hospital also is ranked nationally in five out of ten pediatric specialties by U.S. News & World Report. The New York Eye and Ear Infirmary of Mount Sinai is ranked 11th nationally for Ophthalmology and 44th for Ear, Nose, and Throat. Mount Sinai Beth Israel, Mount Sinai St. Luke's, Mount Sinai West, and South Nassau Communities Hospital are ranked regionally.

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