

A new DNA test for the virus that causes cervical cancer does so much better than current methods that some gynecologists hope it will eventually replace the Pap smear in wealthy countries and cruder tests in poor ones.

Not only could the new test for human papillomavirus, or HPV, save lives; scientists say that women over 30 could drop annual Pap smears and instead have the DNA test just once every 3, 5 or even 10 years, depending on which expert is asked.

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