### International Agency for Research on Cancer



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# **IARC Newsletter - January 2021**

#### **EDITORIAL**

Dear friends of the Agency,

As the world marks Cervical Cancer Awareness Month in January, I would like to share with you how IARC's research is contributing to the implementation of **WHO's strategy for the elimination of cervical cancer** as a public health problem. IARC is re-evaluating the effectiveness of cervical cancer screening, monitoring and evaluating cervical cancer elimination in sub-Saharan Africa, evaluating human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination interventions in low- and middle-income countries, and evaluating the effectiveness of programmes for cervical cancer screening and the treatment of precancerous lesions in different settings. Over the next five years, IARC will evaluate the efficacy and effectiveness, as well as model the impact, of HPV vaccination programmes (including, for example, those with reduced dosing schedules) in different implementation scenarios. The evidence gained will support health authorities in implementing HPV vaccination programmes.

Cervical cancer is one cancer the world can actually eliminate; it's time to do it.

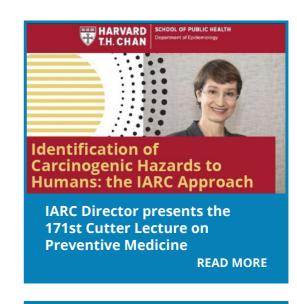
I am delighted to start 2021 with this conviction and look forward to continuing our work on cancer prevention research, to help bring about a world where fewer people develop cancer.

Sending you my best wishes for the New Year,

**Dr Elisabete Weiderpass, IARC Director** 

#### **IARC NEWS**











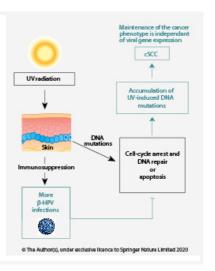


### FOCUS ON EARLY DETECTION, PREVENTION, AND INFECTIONS

#### Beta human papillomaviruses contribute to skin cancer in combination with UV radiation

IARC research findings highlighted a new model of virusmediated carcinogenesis, in which cutaneous beta human papillomavirus (β-HPV) type 38 cooperates with ultraviolet (UV) radiation in the development of cutaneous squamous cell carcinoma (cSCC). β-HPV38 appears to be required only at an early stage of carcinogenesis, facilitating the accumulation of UV-induced DNA mutations, and becoming dispensable after the accumulation of mutations.

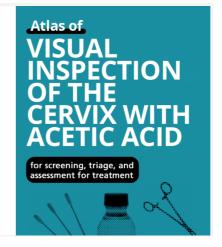
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#### A new online digital atlas

IARC has launched the Atlas of visual inspection of the cervix with acetic acid (VIA) for screening, triage, and assessment for treatment. The objectives of the atlas are to describe the use of VIA as a primary screening test or a test to triage women who test positive for human papillomavirus (HPV), and to explain how application of dilute acetic acid can help in determining eligibility for ablative treatment.

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## A multicentre implementation research study to tackle inequality in the cervical cancer screening continuum in Estonia, Portugal, and Romania

The overall goal of this EU-funded project led by the French National Institute of Health and Medical Research (Inserm) is to identify strategies to improve participation of vulnerable women in the cervical cancer screening continuum. Context-specific interventions will be co-created through stakeholder engagement. IARC will lead the work package aiming to implement and evaluate the co-created interventions in real programmatic settings in **Estonia**, **Portugal**, and **Romania**.

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# Effectiveness of HPV vaccination programme in Bhutan

Scientists from IARC and partner institutions conducted a study to estimate the effectiveness of a vaccination programme against human papillomavirus (HPV) that was implemented in Bhutan in 2010 for girls aged 12–18 years and achieved almost 90% coverage of the target population. The overall reduction in the prevalence of vaccine-targeted HPV types was 93%. The study was published in *Annals of Internal Medicine*. Watch the video of Dr Iacopo Baussano providing additional insight into the article.

WATCH THE VIDEO



# Cervical cancer prevention in women living with HIV (WLHIV)

WLHIV are at elevated risk of HPV infection, cervical precancer, and cancer. IARC, HRP/WHO, and African partners are generating evidence on the effectiveness of screening and treatment approaches in WLHIV. To accelerate cervical cancer elimination, hybrid effectiveness—implementation studies for integrating HPV vaccination and screening into HIV care clinics are being designed.

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#### **HPV-BASED CERVICAL CANCER SCREENING IN DIFFERENT SETTINGS**







IARC, together with international partners, is evaluating screening strategies suitable for different settings: cytology with HPV triage, VIA or HPV testing followed by ablative treatment, use of rapid HPV tests, HPV self-sampling, and novel biomarkers.

WATCH VIDEO

The ESTAMPA multicentre study in Latin America, coordinated by IARC, is evaluating the performance of techniques/strategies to triage HPV-positive women needing further clinical assessment and proposed approaches for the implementation of HPV-based cervical screening.

**WATCH VIDEO** 

IARC, together with international partners, is conducting implementation research to support countries' efforts to reach the 2030 cervical cancer elimination goals. Studies on the adoption of WHO guidelines and on the acceptability and feasibility of HPV-based screening are under way.

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