

Women's reasons for low attendance in the cervical cancer screening programme: experience from Estonia

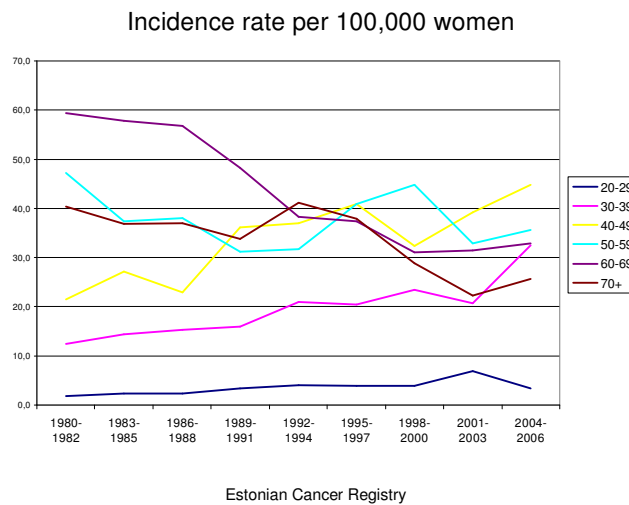
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Cervical cancer in Estonia

- Population of Estonia 1,340,021 (2010)
- Among the female population, cervical cancer is the 6th most common cancer site
- ASIR(w) 15.4 per 100,000 with 159 primarily diagnosed cases in 2006
- ASMR(w) 6.2 per 100,000 with 63 deaths from cervical cancer in 2006
- In the age-group from 20 to 49 yrs the incidence rates more than doubled in 1980-82 to 2004-2006

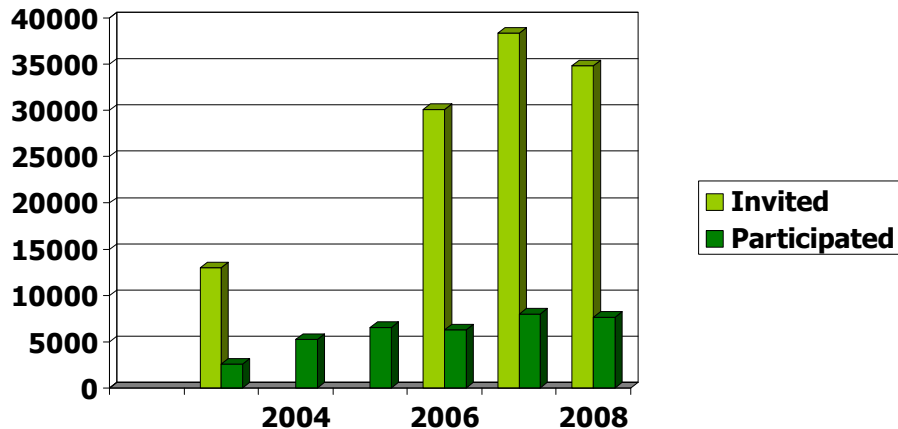
Cervical cancer incidence by age groups in Estonia



Cervical cancer screening in Estonia

- Organized nationwide cervical screening started in 2006, pilot studies in 2003
- Target group women aged 30 to 59 years
- Screening interval 5 yrs after a negative result
- Women diagnosed with cervical cancer, without health insurance and those having had a Pap-smear in past 12 months excluded from the list of invitees
- Trained midwives take Pap-smears at 19 clinics, tests performed at 7 labs
- Pathological results handled according to clinical guidelines
- Lab quality assurance carried out in 2007

Attendance in the cervical cancer screening programme in Estonia



Aims of the present study

To study:

- reasons for low attendance in the organised cervical cancer screening programme
- women's wishes for improving the screening programme
- the present knowledge about cervical cancer risk factors and screening among the screening target group

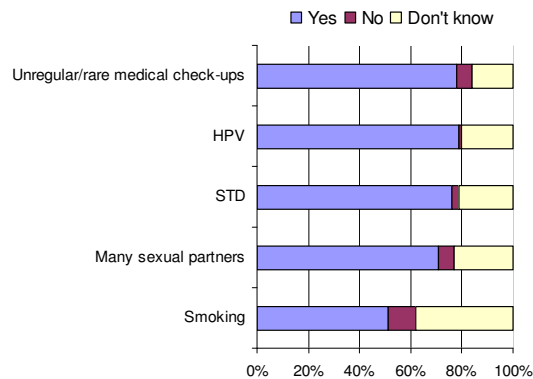
Methods

- Anonymous postal survey to a random sample of 2942 women in the screening population together with the invitation to screening and a prepaid return envelope
- 21 questions in the Estonian and Russian language - respondent's background information, general health behaviour, knowledge about cervical cancer and screening, attitude about screening activities and wishes for better organisation of the screening programme

Results: respondents

- Response rate 29%, altogether 604 (71%) questionnaires in Estonian and 251 (29%) in Russian returned
- Mean age of respondents 43 years
- Most respondents married or cohabiting (74,5%), actively working (78,4%), and living in big towns (45,1%)
- Mean number of children per respondent 1,8
- Less than half (47,8%) had had a gynaecological check-up in past 12 months; nearly quarter were regular smokers (22,5%); about half (51,2%) had ever used OC; most (60,4%) had never been diagnosed with a STD; many women (42,7%) had had more than five sexual partners per lifetime

Women's knowledge about risk factors of cervical cancer



Younger women (OR 2,35; 95% CI: 1,51-3,66) and Estonian-speaking women (OR 2,08; 95% CI: 1,48-2,94) were better informed about cervical cancer risk factors.

Results: knowledge about cervical cancer screening

71,8% of respondents had heard about screening

	OR (95% CI), crude	OR (95% CI), adjusted
Age group		
30, 35 yrs	1	1
40, 45 years	1,26 (0,85-1,85)	???????
50, 55 years	0,99 (0,68-1,43)	1,19 (0,79-1,78)
Nationality		
Russian	1	1
Estonian	5,41 (3,90-7,52)	5,46 (3,59-8,32)
Living-place		
Town	1	1
Countryside	1,97 (1,39-2,79)	1,17 (0,74-1,87)

Wishes to attend the screening programme

	OR (95% CI), crude	OR (95% CI), adjusted
Age group		
30, 35 yrs	1	1
40, 45 yrs	1,58 (0,97-2,57)	1,63 (0,97-2,73)
50, 55 yrs	1,49 (0,93-2,39)	1,41 (0,86-2,319)
Nationality		
Russian	1	1
Estonian	0,51 (0,31-0,84)	0,62 (0,27-1,47)
Living-place		
Countryside	1	1
Town	1,37 (0,91-2,05)	0,97 (0,46-2,04)
Parity		
0-1	1	1
>=2	1,23 (0,83-1,83)	1,31 (0,80-2,169)

Results: reasons for non-attendance in the screening programme



Results: women's wishes to improve the screening programme

- Most respondents (71%) were satisfied with the current organisation of the programme
- Most of them wanted to make the appointment by phone (84%) and to have the test taken by a midwife (93%)
- Women wanted to receive information about the test result by phone (35%), by e-mail (34%) or by ordinary mail (29%)
- Most respondents (75%) wanted to receive information about screening by mail together with the personal invitation

Results: women's wishes for receiving information about screening

	Number	Proportion
Personally mailed invitation with a detailed information leaflet	637	74,8%
Articles in women's magazines	165	19,4%
Information by medical staff	160	18,8%
Advertisements on TV	84	9,9%
No wish for more information	48	5,6%
Other sources (Internet, etc)	25	2,9%

Conclusions

- In Estonia, women prefer to be personally and delicately informed about cervical cancer screening
- Russian-speaking women need more information about the screening programme in their mother language
- All women need more detailed information about the programme, and encouragement for participation
- Better organisation of screening services has to be provided

Thank you!

- EUROCHIP-3
 - Estonian Health Insurance Fund;
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