



UNDERSTANDING FACTORS RELATED TO WOMEN'S ADHERENCE TO COLPOSCOPY

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The American Cancer Society (ACS, 2013) estimated that in 2013 there were 12,340 new cases of cervical cancer with 4,030 deaths. Half of the cervical cancers diagnosed in the United States are in women who were never screened, 10 percent occur among women not screened within the past 5 years (Saslow et al., 2012) and the remainders are likely due to lack of adherence to colposcopy and follow-up (Massad et al., 2012). Although the incidence of cervical cancer has decreased because of cervical cancer screenings with Papanicolaou (Pap) smear tests (U.S. Preventive Services Task Force [USPSTF], 2012), being rarely or never screened or failing to follow-up on abnormal cytology results are the main risk factors for most cervical cancer deaths (American Society for Colposcopy and Cervical Pathology [ASCCP], 2012).

Abstract: Early detection can prevent death from cervical cancer, but success is dependent on women with abnormal cytology attending follow-up procedures, including colposcopy. Factors that influence adherence to colposcopy include age, race, education, socioeconomic status, smoking, chemical dependence, intimate partner violence and anxiety. Comprehension of abnormal Pap smear results and knowledge of current treatment guidelines and follow-up is important in the prevention of cervical cancer. Understanding factors that could inhibit adherence to colposcopy will allow for tailored communication and individualized treatment to prevent colposcopy default. Implementation of colposcopy clinics with designated nurses to track and monitor adherence could help. DOI: 10.1111/1751-486X.12148

Keywords: adherence | cervical cancer | colposcopy | Pap smear

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