



# Surveillance Update: Cervical and Breast Cancer Screening Visits Among Alaskan Women

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Women's preventive health care visits are important for monitoring infectious and chronic diseases, as well as informing approaches to treatment. In 2022, **75%** of Alaskan adult women reported having a routine health care visit in the past year.<sup>1</sup> A key component of routine health care visits for women is screening for cervical and breast cancers. This data sheet describes patterns in cancer screening visits, as well as their incidence and mortality statistics, for cervical and breast cancer in Alaska. All estimates are age-adjusted.

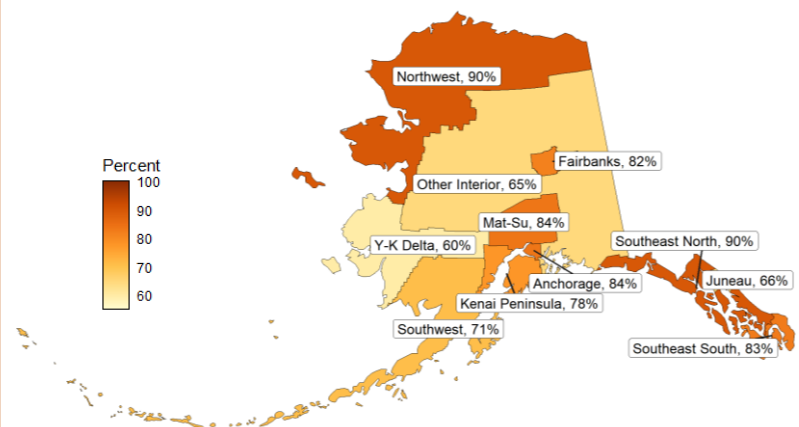
**Cervical cancer** screening recommendations vary based on factors such as age, prior history of cervical cancer, and infection with human papillomaviruses (HPV). Screening consists of a Pap smear test, an HPV test, or both, depending on these factors.<sup>2</sup>

HPV vaccination can prevent up to **90%** of cancers caused by HPV.<sup>3</sup> In 2022 **62%** of Alaskan females and **61%** of males aged 13-17 years old were fully vaccinated for HPV, compared to **65%** and **61%** nationwide, respectively.<sup>4</sup>

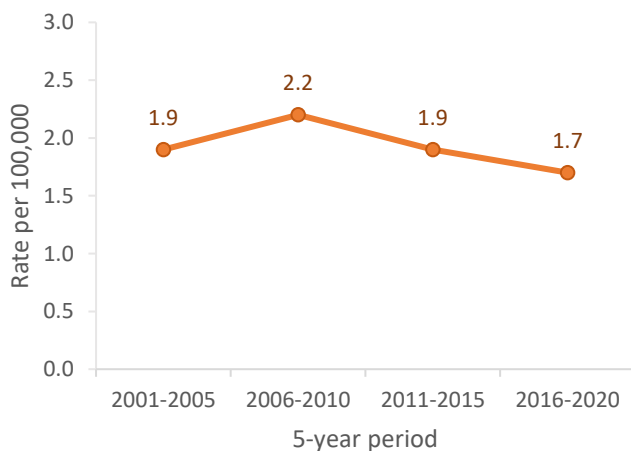
In Alaska, the **incidence of cervical cancer** during 2015-2019 was **7.8 cases per 100,000 women**, higher than the nationwide rate (6.9 per 100,000) in the same period.<sup>5,6</sup>

During 2015-2019, **37%** of incident cases were **late stage**, in Alaska.<sup>5</sup>

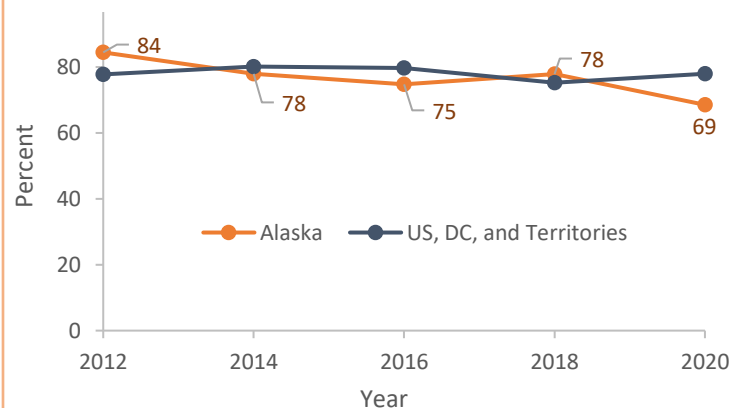
Statewide, **80% of Alaskan women met screening guidelines for cervical cancer**, with differences observed by region (BRFSS 2018 and 2020)



**Cervical cancer mortality rates** over time in Alaska (ACR, 2001-2020)



Reported **Pap smear testing (in past 3 years)** has **decreased** among women aged 21-65 in Alaska, while rates remained flat in the US, DC, and Territories (BRFSS 2012-2020)



Alaskan women **without insurance** were less likely to report having a mammogram in the past 2 years compared to those **with insurance**, (30% vs 63%, respectively) (BRFSS, 2016-2022).

Percent

60  
55  
50  
45

Northwest, 64%

Fairbanks, 60%

Other Interior, 60%

Mat-Su, 61%

Y-K Delta, 44%

Southeast North, 56%

Anchorage, 64%

Juneau, 50%

Kenai Peninsula, 49%

Southwest, 52%

Southeast South, 57%

Year	Rate per 100,000
2013	20
2014	25
2015	18
2016	20
2017	17
2018	16
2019	19
2020	15

A bar chart comparing COVID-19 rates per 100,000 across ten Alaska regions. The y-axis is labeled 'Rate per 100,000' and ranges from 0 to 150 in increments of 50. The x-axis lists the regions: Anchorage, Fairbanks, Interior, Juneau, Kenai Peninsula, Mat-Su, Northwest, Southeast, Southwest, and Y-K Delta. A horizontal line at 122.5 represents the state-wide average, with a callout box indicating 'State-wide, 122.5'. The bars show that Anchorage and Fairbanks have the highest rates, while Y-K Delta has the lowest.

Region	Rate per 100,000 (approx.)
Anchorage	135
Fairbanks	130
Interior	100
Juneau	115
Kenai Peninsula	125
Mat-Su	110
Northwest	85
Southeast	115
Southwest	100
Y-K Delta	45
State-wide Average	122.5

- ❖ Review patient records and contact those who haven't received an annual preventative visit or who are not up to date on their screenings.
- ❖ Motivate patients to receive timely screening for cervical and breast cancers in accordance with USPSTF guidelines.
- ❖ Connect eligible Alaskans to resources such as the [Alaska Breast and Cervical Screening Assistance Program](#) to help defray the financial burden of cancer screening and diagnosis.
- ❖ Recommend vaccination for patients aged 9-26 to get immunized against HPV.
- ❖ Frame HPV vaccination as cancer prevention, rather than prevention of sexually transmittable infections.

- 1) Alaska Department of Health, Division of Public Health, Section of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion; Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (2016-2022); <https://alaska-dph.shinyapps.io/BRFSS/>.
- 2) US Preventive Services Task Force, Curry SJ, Krist AH, et al. Screening for Cervical Cancer: US Preventive Services Task Force Recommendation Statement. JAMA. 2018; 320(7): 674. doi: 10.1001/jama.2018.10897
- 3) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). HPV and Cancer. <https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/hpv/index.html>. Accessed 11/26/2024.
- 4) America's Health Rankings. HPV Vaccination in United States. [https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/measures/Immunize HPV](https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/measures/Immunize_HPV). Accessed 01/14/2025.
- 5) Alaska Cancer Registry, HAVRS. Incidence of Cancers Associated with Screening and Modifiable Risk Factors: Alaska 2015-2019. Feb 2023.
- 6) SEER Cancer Stat Facts. SEER. Accessed January 27, 2025. <https://seer.cancer.gov/statfacts/index.html>
- 7) US Preventive Services Task Force, Nicholson, WK, et al. Screening for Breast Cancer: US Preventive Services Task Force Recommendation Statement. JAMA. 2024; 331(22): 1918. doi: 10.1001/jama.2024.5534