

HIGHLANDS PATHOLOGY CONSULTANTS, PC IS FIRST GROUP IN REGION TO OFFER ADVANCED CANCER SCREENING SYSTEM

Highlands Pathology Consultants, PC is pleased to announce their implementation of the ThinPrep® Imaging System for cervical cancer screening. The ThinPrep Imaging System is the first and only fully integrated, FDA-approved, interactive computer system that assists cytotechnologists and pathologists in the primary screening of ThinPrep Pap Test slides.

The research data submitted to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) showed that adding computer-assisted screening to ThinPrep methodology improves sensitivity and specificity for detection of abnormalities that may be precursors of cervical carcinoma. The computer, using a special camera, scans and evaluates every cell present on a ThinPrep slide. The cells have previously been stained with a dye that allows for evaluation of the amount of genetic material (DNA) in the cell. The computer then identifies and records coordinates for cells or groups of cells that are suspicious. Using an integrated microscope, the cytotechnologist reviews the areas designated as suspicious. If any of these cells are confirmed as abnormal by the cytotechnologist, the entire slide is examined a second time and then forwarded to the pathologist for final interpretation.

After an extensive evaluation of currently available technologies, the ThinPrep Imaging System was implemented by Highlands Pathology Consultants, PC in June of 2004. An analysis of data collected during the first year of use revealed a significant increase in the detection of lesions that may be precursors to cervical cancer, supporting the decision to bring this revolutionary technology to medical professionals and their patients.

According to the National Cancer Institute, approximately 15,000 women in the United States are diagnosed with cervical cancer each year and about 5,000 die of the disease annually. Detecting and eradicating the precursors to cervical cancer are essential to prevent cervical cancer. "We are committed to providing our medical professionals and their patients with the best new technology to detect disease early and the ThinPrep Imaging System enables us to do that," agree Dr. Jere Ferguson and Dr. Marcus Grimes, Medical Directors of Cytopathology for Highlands Pathology Consultants. "Using the ThinPrep Imaging System offers significant improvement over previous manual screening technologies. Making this technology available was simply the right thing to do for women in this region."

Highlands Pathology Consultants, PC provides full service cytology and anatomic pathology to physicians, hospitals, and their patients in Northeast Tennessee, Southwest Virginia and Kentucky. For more information on the ThinPrep Pap Test and the ThinPrep Imaging System, please contact Lisa Collette at 423-323-5391.