

**TO: MEDIA**

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**Bruce Williams, DO**

**EXCELA LABORATORY PROVIDES HPV TESTING IN-HOUSE.  
SPEEDING TIME TO DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT**

**GREENSBURG, PA, November 20, 2013 ...** Human Papillomavirus is the most common sexually transmittable infection, yet it can be difficult to detect and if left unchecked can lead to cervical cancer. That's why the number of physicians testing for the virus is climbing. To better serve doctors and their female patients, Excelsa Health now offers HPV testing in its laboratory speeding the time to diagnosis and treatment.

As a part of the new guidelines for HPV testing, doctors begin ordering HPV tests after a woman turns 30 years old. The sample is collected at the same time as a Pap test and held for 21 days in case re-testing is necessary. While the Pap smear looks for abnormal cells, the HPV test checks the patient for the active virus.

"HPV is a common virus, but can clear rather quickly in younger people. After the age of 30, if a woman is carrying the virus, she is at a greater risk for cervical cancer," said Bruce Williams, DO, gynecologist and obstetrician with the Excelsa Health OB-GYN practice of Gyno Associates, Inc. in Latrobe. "Having this test available in-house not only provides us an opportunity to track the virus locally, but decreases the time patients spend wondering if their results are positive."

Since the implementation of in-house HPV testing in July, Excelsa Health has reduced turn-around time for results by two-thirds, while processing nearly 100 HPV tests per week.

If a patient does test positive for the virus, Excelsa Health also offers physicians the option of requesting genotyping. The laboratory can genotype for strains 16 and 18 of HPV; these specific types have been known to cause cervical cancer.

“This testing ability provides quality, comprehensive care to female patients and gives the clinician a full-rounded picture of the patient,” said Debbie Glessner, a cytologist at Excelsa Health Latrobe Hospital. “With these results the physician can determine a comprehensive form of treatment with the focus of preserving the cervix.”

Although physicians do not typically order HPV testing for women prior to age 30, patients concerned of exposure to the virus may ask their care provider to order the test. To guard against HPV, a vaccine is available to males and females ages 9 to 26.

“The best audience to reach is young men and women who are not sexually active so they may get the vaccine as a prevention against HPV prior to exposure,” said Dr. Williams.

The HPV vaccine can be administered by Dr. Williams or the patient’s primary care physician.

Native to the Bahamas, Dr. Williams is among the newest additions to the Excelsa Health Medical Staff. He attended the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine at its Erie campus and completed his OB/Gyn residency at Akron City Hospital in Akron, Ohio.

He was practicing in Atlanta, Ga. when he heard of Excelsa Health.

“I wanted to get away from the larger city when I spoke with a friend who told me about this area,” said Dr. Williams. “He said it was a smaller area that feels like a larger city, and when I came to visit I was blown away.”

Certified in da Vinci robotic assisted surgery, Dr. Williams specializes in minimally invasive procedures. For an appointment, visit [www.myexceladoc.org](http://www.myexceladoc.org).