



Facts About DES & Vaginal / Cervical Cancers

DES – a synthetic estrogen that was prescribed to pregnant women during 1938—1971 to prevent miscarriages or premature delivery – has been linked to several health risks. Included among these, is an increased risk for clear-cell adenocarcinoma (CCA), a rare vaginal and cervical cancer, among DES Daughters – women who were exposed to DES in the womb.

Research available through CDC's *DES Update* currently confirms the following facts pertaining to the affect of DES exposure on a woman's risk for CCA.

CCA HEALTH RISKS

- CCA has been diagnosed in DES Daughters up to age 50.
- DES Daughters are 40 times more likely to develop CCA of the vagina and cervix than unexposed women.
- Approximately one of every 1,000 DES Daughters will develop CCA of the vagina or the cervix.
- Most cases of CCA of the vagina and cervix have occurred in women in their late teens and early 20s. However, a small number of DES-related clear-cell cancers have been diagnosed in women in their 30s and 40s. Because CCA is a continued health risk, DES Daughters should be screened for CCA throughout their lifetimes.

ASSESSING LIKELIHOOD OF DES EXPOSURE

- CDC's *DES Update* Web site provides a Self-Assessment Guide featuring a series of questions designed to help individuals assess their likelihood of DES exposure.
- An interactive version of CDC's *DES Update* Self-Assessment Guide is free and available online at www.cdc.gov/DES, and individuals can also request a printed version by calling toll-free at 1-888-232-6789.