

# Spotlight on Cervical Cancer

An estimated 13,360 new cases of cervical cancer were diagnosed in the U.S. in 2025.

The HPV vaccination is a safe and effective way to prevent cervical cancer; it offers the most protection when given before a person becomes sexually active.

The HPV vaccine does not protect against all HPV types that cause cervical cancer, so routine screening (Pap smear and HPV tests) are very important.

The five-year relative survival rate is 68%.



## Our Impact on Cervical Cancer Research

We've funded

**five grants totaling \$2 million.**

V Foundation funded researchers, over their careers, have:

Received

**111 grants and  
\$4.9 billion in funding.**

Produced

**over 1,000  
publications.**

Worked on

**seven clinical  
trials.**

## V Foundation Funded Researchers – Proven Positive Impact

- **Katherine Tossas, Ph.D.**, a 2023 V Scholar at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Massey Cancer Center, studies a condition called high-grade squamous intraepithelial lesions (HSIL) that can progress into cervical cancer.
- About 250,000 women are diagnosed with HSIL each year. Women with HSIL need frequent follow-ups and potentially painful treatments to prevent HSIL from turning into cancer. It is difficult to predict which women with HSIL will go on to develop cervical cancer.
- Black women get HSIL more often than white women and face more serious problems from it.
- Dr. Tossas is studying how the vaginal microbiome affects HSIL and how differences in the vaginal microbiome between Black, Latina, and white women may play a role in HSIL frequency and outcomes.
- While the study is still ongoing, this work will provide a greater understanding of how pre-cancerous lesions may or may not turn into cervical cancer. It has the potential to radically change interception guidelines and tailor them to populations based on microbiome differences, reducing invasive and painful procedures when they are not needed.



*Katherine Tossas, Ph.D.,  
2023 V Scholar*