Key Points to Note:

- Cervical cancer is the second most common cancer in women worldwide.
- Almost every case of cervical cancer can be prevented by cervical screening and by vaccination against the Human papillomavirus (HPV).
- All women should have access to cervical screening and all adolescent girls should have access to HPV vaccination.

**Fortis launches Cervical Cancer Awareness Campaign on the occasion of World Cancer Day**

*Cervical Cancer is one of the leading causes of cancer deaths in women globally and the leading cause of cancer deaths in India~*

**February 04, 2015, Gurgaon:** On the occasion of World Cancer Day, Fortis Healthcare Limited, India’s leading Integrated healthcare delivery provider, launched a **Cervical Cancer Awareness** campaign to help spread awareness and educate women on the varied aspects of the disease. The week-long campaign has kicked off on 31st January, 2015. As a part of the campaign, consumers can avail free screening for abnormal cervical cell growth and administer HPV (Human Papilloma Virus) vaccination at a discount, at select Fortis Healthcare facilities namely, The Fortis Memorial Research Institute (FMRI), Gurgaon and Fortis La Femme, Greater Kailash II, New Delhi.

Cervical Cancer is one of the leading causes of cancer deaths in women globally, and in India, it is the leading cause of cancer deaths among women in India. With approximately 1.32 lakh new cases of cervical cancer being diagnosed and about 74,000 deaths occurring annually, India accounts for nearly one-third of cervical cancer deaths across the world.

According to **Dr. Suneeta Mittal, Director and HOD, Department of Gynecology and Obstetrics, FMRI,** “Most women in their adulthood have been infected with HPV (Human Papilloma Virus) at some point in time. While an infection may go away on its own, sometimes it can cause genital warts or lead to cervical cancer. Specialists recommend the advantages for women to have regular Pap smear tests. This test is to identify any changes in cervical cells before they turn into cancer. Once the cell changes are detected, it becomes easier to prevent cervical cancer.”

During a Pap test, the doctor scrapes a small sample of cells from the surface of the cervix to look for cell changes. If a Pap test shows abnormal cell changes, your doctor may do other tests to look for precancerous or cancer cells on the cervix.

Speaking about the importance of such awareness camps, **Dr. Mittal** explained, “The vast majority of women worldwide do not have access to these programs or do not take advantage of them because of financial constraints, competing priorities or lack of knowledge.”
According to **Dr Dilpreet Brar, Regional Director, FMRI**, “Almost every case of cervical cancer could be prevented with vaccination against the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) and diagnosed early and thus treated fully when combined with screening. Through our campaign, we want to create awareness about this growing concern and ensure that more and more women come forward in safeguarding themselves from this disease.”

**Dr. Tripat Choudhary, Director Gynecology and Obstetrics, Fortis La Femme**, says, “The condition has two stages – **prevention** which includes vaccinating girls above the age of 10 years till the time of their first sexual intercourse. Although administration of the drug is promoted till the age of 45 years, the most effect age for a catch up vaccine is till the age of 26 years as the cervix is still young and prone to contracting the virus. “The second is **cure** which can be a surgical procedure, such as a hysterectomy and removal of pelvic lymph nodes with or without removal of ovaries and fallopian tubes; chemotherapy and/or Radiation therapy.”

“Depending on how advanced the cancer is, one may have the option of one or more treatments. Or one may have a combination of treatments. A surgery becomes inevitable even if the detection is at an early stage. It is advisable to get regular Pap smear tests which can help determine premalignant stages of cancer early and advancement of the disease can be averted. Once the abnormality of cell growth is established through further tests, the patient can undergo either cryosurgery, electrocautery or laser to burn away the affected cells. In more severe conditions, a young patient might have to undergo removal of a large part of the cervix which could be a hysterectomy in case of older patients,” added **Dr. Choudhary**.

As a part of annual health check, regular pelvic examination (which is painless) should be mandatory for women above the age of 25 years or three years after a woman becomes sexually active. It is **important** to have a **test** every two years, so that any abnormal cells or precancerous changes are detected early, monitored and treated if necessary to prevent cancer. Cervical cancer can almost always be prevented, and having regular Pap tests is the key.

**About Fortis Healthcare Limited:**
Fortis Healthcare Limited is a leading integrated healthcare delivery service provider in India. The healthcare verticals of the company primarily comprise hospitals, diagnostics and day care specialty facilities. Currently, the company operates its healthcare delivery services in India, Singapore, Dubai, Mauritius and Sri Lanka with 55 healthcare facilities (including projects under development), approximately 10,000 potential beds and 270 diagnostic centres. In a global study of the 30 most technologically advanced hospitals in the world, its flagship, the Fortis Memorial Research Institute’ (FMRI), was ranked No.2, by ‘topmastersinhealthcare.com, and placed ahead of many other outstanding medical institutions in the world.

**For more information, please contact:**

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