# Denise Asks Awkward Questions – Appointment Undies

**Denise:** Hello everybody. I'm comedian Denise Scott, and welcome to Denise Asks Awkward Questions with Jean Hailes. Today I'm joined by the gorgeous Jess Davis, Practice Nurse at Jean Hailes. Now the thing about nurses is that they see and hear everything. So Jess is going to give us the inside goss. So, let's get cracking and get awkward!

Steph from Belconnen ACT wants to know, "Do you notice underwear patients are wearing when we come to an appointment?"

**Jess:** Denise, I don't even notice what underwear I'm wearing half the time. So there is little to no chance I'm gonna take much notice of what underwear patients are wearing when they come.

**Denise:** Are you really being honest there?

**Jess:** I am being a hundred percent honest.

**Denise:** Have you never thought, 'Those underpants are disgusting?'

**Jess:** To be truthful, by the time it's getting to the point where I'm actually doing the cervical screening test, the undies are often folded up on a chair or the floor anyway, and I'm not really looking out for them.

So I'd really just encourage people to wear whatever is gonna make you feel more comfortable on the day. If that's your comfy undies, that's great. If that's your sexy undies, good for you. But we really don't take much notice at all.

**Denise:** That's a really good thing for me to hear. Given the state of my underpants.

We have a question from Emily who lives in Echuca Victoria, beautiful part of the world...

**Jess:** Absolutely, it is. I'm actually from Echuca as well, so Emily must be a country bumpkin like me.

**Denise:** And perhaps is able to drive a paddle steamer?

**Jess:** Yeah, that's our daily commute to and from work on the paddle steamers.

**Denise:** Of course it is. Now, Emily wants to know, "I'm behind with getting a pap smear and now I've got a letter saying it's time to book for a cervical test. Do I need to do both?"

**Jess:** Definitely not. So they're different tests, but the cervical screening test has replaced the PAP test.

**Denise:** Ah.

**Jess:** So you definitely don't need to do both. And basically the new cervical screening test, it's a little bit more specific and a little bit more sensitive than the old test. And that's why it's safer to do it every five years instead of every two years.

**Denise:** And so it picks up more than a pap smear? When you say it's more sensitive?

**Jess:** Yeah, good question. So it doesn't pick up more, it's just testing for slightly different things. So the old PAP test was looking for abnormal cells or cell changes, whereas the cervical screening test is looking for HPV.

**Denise:** And HPV is the human...

**Jess:** Yeah, human papillomavirus, yeah.

**Denise:** Yes.

**Jess:** Thank you for clarifying that.

**Denise:** Well, I should know this because I have it.

**Jess:** Oh, there you go.

**Denise:** Yes.

**Jess:** So you found that out on one of your last screening tests?

**Denise:** Yes. And that therefore means I just have to have a little more in the way of regular checkups.

**Jess:** Yeah, exactly right. And if you were to test positive for HPV, your doctor or a nurse would talk you through the next steps, but it just means that you need a little bit closer monitoring and maybe some further investigations just to see what the virus is doing without needing to do too much.

**Denise:** Excellent.

All right, that's it for today. If I'm not here and you have more questions, go to jean.hailes.org.au. Bye everybody.

Information about Jean Hailes for Women’s Health

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