

What to expect at your first Female Pelvic Exam

A pelvic exam (an exam of your privates) is recommended for females if:

- 1) you have had sex
- 2) you have any changes or questions about your privates or sexual health (such as pain, discharge, unusual bleeding from your vagina, itchiness)
- 3) you are 21 years of age or older and have never had a pelvic exam

FIRST: Your provider will ask you questions about your period, sex, pregnancy, and sexually transmitted disease and infections (STD/STIs). It's important to tell the truth when you answer these questions – your provider will not share that information unless you give the OK.

SECOND: You will undress and put a gown or sheet on. You will probably be left alone in the room to change your clothes.

THIRD: You will lie on the table and your health care provider will feel your breasts for any lumps or things that are not normal. Your provider may also teach you how to check your breasts at home.*

FOURTH: You will put your feet in some straps that will help keep your legs apart, and your provider will do the pelvic exam. There are usually 3 parts of the exam.

1. **External Exam:** The provider looks at the outside of your privates for bumps or things that aren't normal.
2. **Speculum Exam:** The provider uses a metal or plastic tool called a speculum to open your vagina to see you vagina and cervix (the opening to the area of your body where babies can grow) and takes samples from inside your body (Pap test). The Pap test checks for changes in the cervix. Samples of discharge may be taken to check for infections or STD/STIs.
3. **Bimanual Exam:** The provider will insert one or two gloved fingers inside you gently and gently push with the other hand from the outside on your lower belly. This is to check that your body parts are the normal size and in the right place. The provider may also check your bottom by placing a finger inside.

LAST: The provider will let you ask questions and then leave the room so you can get dressed. Most teen girls have a normal Pap test. At our Washtenaw County Public Health Adult Health Clinic, we will call you with all results, no matter if they are positive or negative. Results are usually available within 10 days. Be sure to ask your provider how and when they will contact you about your results.

*For more information on breast self-exams, see:

http://kidshealth.org/teen/expert/girl_stuff/bse.html
<http://www.nationalbreastcancer.org/breast-self-exam>

Contact Us:

Adult Health Clinic
Washtenaw County Public Health
555 Towner Street, Ypsilanti MI 48198
Call 734-544-6840
Visit <http://publichealth.ewashtenaw.org>

Some TIPS...

If you can, come prepared to this visit by knowing the date your last period started.

Do not come to your exam if you are on your period unless you need to be seen because you are having an abnormal discharge, burning when you pee, lower belly pain or bleeding when it isn't your period time.

It is your right to ask for a different health care provider if you do not feel comfortable with the one you have. Or, ask for a female to be in the room with you if you have a male provider.

It is your right to bring someone into the exam room with you, family member or friend, if you choose.

None of this should hurt, but it might be uncomfortable. The best way to deal with this discomfort is to take some slow deep breaths. Breathe in through your nose and blow out through your mouth. If you feel any pain during the exam, tell your health care provider.

If you want, ask for a mirror during the exam so you can see what happening.

Know your body so you can tell when anything changes.

Ask questions! This is a great time to ask about your body, sex, STIs and birth control.