



What I Should Know About Going To My Gynecologist!

What is a Gynecologist?

- » A gynecologist is a doctor for women's reproductive health issues.
- » They help women learn about their bodies and how to take care of them.

Why should I go to a gynecologist?

- » A gynecologist helps keep you healthy.
- » They can answer questions about private parts of your body, periods, or sex.
- » They treat women's health issues like infections or painful periods.
- » They can help if you want to get pregnant or help you with birth control.

How can my gynecologist make me comfortable?

- » Your gynecologist understands you may feel uncomfortable because they are examining private parts of your body.
- » You might prefer a female gynecologist or a male gynecologist. You have the right to choose!
- » You can have someone else in the room you trust during the appointment and exams.
- » If you are sensitive to light or sound, let your gynecologist know.
- » If you are a wheelchair user, the gynecologist may examine you in your chair. Some offices have special exam tables for wheelchair users.

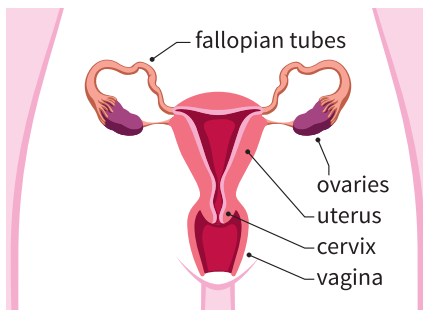


What happens at a gynecology visit

- » Your gynecologist will talk to you so you can get to know each other.
- » Some of the questions will be about things like periods or sexual activity.
- » The gynecologist will teach you about your body and how to take care of it.
- » Your gynecologist may also do a pelvic exam, a pap smear, and a breast exam.



What is a pelvic exam?



- » A pelvic exam is when a gynecologist checks the female reproductive organs that are mostly inside your body (vagina, cervix, uterus, fallopian tubes, and ovaries) and the vulva on the outside.
- » After they examine the vulva, they will insert a tool called a speculum so they can look at your vagina and cervix. A pap smear may be done while the speculum is still inside your vagina.
- » After the speculum exam, your gynecologist will also feel inside and around your pelvis. They will use gloves and put gel on their hands to make you more comfortable. Usually, they insert two fingers inside the vagina and press down on the lower part of your belly with their other hand. This helps them to feel and examine your uterus and ovaries. If you feel any pain or are uncomfortable, let your doctor know right away!

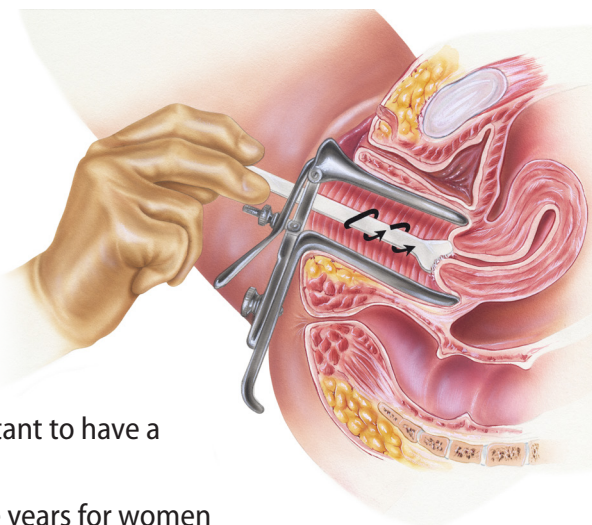


Always remember to ask your doctor if you have any questions!

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What is a pap smear?

- » A pap smear tests to see if you have a virus called HPV. HPV can cause cancer of the cervix.
- » To do a pap smear, your gynecologist will take a small brush and sweep it across your cervix. You might feel a light scratch or nothing at all. The brush will take some cells that will be tested to see if they are or could become cancerous. Even if you don't have sex, it is still important to have a pap smear.
- » The pap smear is done every three years for women aged 21 to 29 years old.
- » The pap smear is done every five years for women aged 30 to 65 years old.



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What about breast exams?

- » Your gynecologist may ask to examine your breasts.
- » They are checking for bumps or changes in the skin that may be cancer.
- » If you feel uncomfortable or want to stop, let your gynecologist know.