

GYN: Frequently Asked Questions

Screening Mammograms:

- The following are recommendations for *normal* screening mammograms:
 - Age 40+ : Every 1-2 years
 - Age 50+ : Yearly
- *If you find a lump or anything abnormal you are advised to make an appointment with your doctor for a breast exam immediately.*
 - A breast abnormality should be examined here with an office visit. This way a provider can then get a good history regarding abnormality. Further testing may or may not include a diagnostic mammogram.

Menopause:

- *Do the providers prescribe bio-identical hormones?*
 - Bio-identical hormones are hormones that are the same molecular composition of what our own body makes. For women that are appropriate candidates we do prescribe FDA approved manufactured products that are bio-identical.
- *I'm having a lot of hot flashes and night sweats. What should I do?*
 - Hot flashes and night sweats can be caused for various reasons:
 - Hot flashes and/or night sweats that are associated with perimenopause or menopause are due to a drop or lack of estrogen in the body. The symptoms can vary in severity from being just a nuisance up to being debilitating. Treatment depends on the severity.
 - Nuisance hot flashes can be dealt with by dressing in cooler clothing, avoiding hot beverages, baths or showers, hot a spicy foods, caffeine, smoking and alcohol.
 - Alternative medicine treatments can include black cohosh and acupuncture.
 - There are also hormonal and/or non-hormonal prescription medications that a woman may be a candidate to use.
 - You and your provider can discuss the options and decide what may be best for you.

Vaginal Discharge:

- *I have colored vaginal discharge with a foul odor; do I need to be seen?*
 - Experiencing vaginal discharge may indicate a yeast infection, bacterial overgrowth, bacterial vaginosis, or an infection with a parasite called trichomonis. A test done in the office called Affirm with an examination can make the diagnosis.

Pelvic Pain:

- Pelvic pain may indicate a gynecologic, bowel, or bladder problem. An office visit is necessary to evaluate.

Birth Control Pills:

- *I missed one or two of my birth control pills, what now?*
 - If you only missed one pill, you need to make it up as soon as you remember it. If you've missed 2 you need to take 2 at a time for 2 days. Call the clinic if you've missed 3 or more.
- *I started taking birth control pills for the first time and I'm having a lot of spotting; what does this mean?*
 - This could mean any of the following:
 - Your body is just getting used to the pills;
 - You are taking your pills irregularly, missing or skipping pills. *Please remember to take your pills at the same time every day;*
 - Or you could possibly have a sexually transmitted infection.
 - Make an office visit and this can be determined by your provider.

Regular Check-ups:

- *Do I have to be seen yearly if I've been told that I don't need a pap smear every year?*
 - Yes! While a woman's risk of cervical cancer may decrease with age, her risk of breast, uterine, and ovarian cancer increases. Consequently, the physical exam should be done yearly.
- *When should I have my first pap smear?*
 - Age 21+ :every 2 years if pap smear results are normal
 - Age 30+ :every 3 years if there are 3 previously normal pap smears and/or the HPV viral test is negative.

Abnormal Pap Smears:

- *My pap smear came back abnormal. Should I be worried?*
 - The following are different levels of abnormal Pap smear results:
 - *ASCUS* is generally mild and accounts for 5% of pap smears;
 - *LGSIL* is when cellular features are mildly abnormal, enough to warrant further testing in the form of colposcopy. These changes rarely indicate cancer and may or may not require some form of treatment;
 - *AGUS* indicated changes in cells from inside the cervical opening. This could be from inflammations, menses, low-grade changes, or, in rare cases, cancer. Further evaluation is needed such as colposcopy, endometrial biopsy, and/or ultrasound, which will be determined by the physician.

Contraception:

- *The following are contraceptive options we offer at our clinic:*
 - Orals Contraceptive Pills (OCP)
 - NuvaRing

- Intrauterine Device (IUD)
 - Mirena
 - Paragaurd
- Implanon
- Depo Provera
- Ortho Evra Patch
- Diaphragm
- Tubal Ligation
- Essure (non-reversible)

Lab Work:

- Can I get labs drawn at your clinic if another doctor has ordered the lab work, and vice versa?
 - We may be able to perform lab work if we have a written order with a diagnosis from the ordering physician. However, sometimes we do not have the necessary equipment to do all the lab work. Please check with us first. Likewise, we may have you get the labs done elsewhere, but an order will be given to you, along with a diagnosis for the testing.