

# What to expect at your first PELVIC EXAM....

Most health care providers will suggest that you get your first pelvic exam (an exam of your privates) if, 1) you have sex, 2) you have any changes or questions about your privates or sexual health (having pain, discharge, unusual bleeding from your vagina, itchiness), 3) you have never had a pelvic exam and are 21 years of age or older.

- 1<sup>st</sup>** The provider will ask you questions about your period, sex, pregnancy, and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). It's important to tell the truth when you answer these questions - your provider will not share that information unless you give the OK.
- 2<sup>nd</sup>** You will undress and put a gown or sheet on. You will probably be left alone in the room to change your clothes.
- 3<sup>rd</sup>** You will lay 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.\*
- 4<sup>th</sup>** 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 your vagina and cervix (the opening to the area of your body where babies grow) and takes samples from inside your body. The Pap test checks for changes in the cervix. Samples of discharge may be taken to check for infections and STDs.
  3. Bimanual Exam: The provider will insert one or two gloved fingers inside you and gently push with the other hand from the outside on your lower belly. This is to check that your inside body parts are the normal size and in the right place. Sometimes the provider will also check your bottom by placing a finger inside.
- 5<sup>th</sup>** The provider will let you ask questions and then leaves the room so you can change. Most teen girls have normal Pap tests. If the results of the test are normal you may not hear anything. If the results of the tests are not normal, someone from your provider's office should contact you within a week.

\*For more information on how to perform a breast self-exam, see:  
[http://www.kidshealth.com/teen/sexual\\_health/girls/bse.html](http://www.kidshealth.com/teen/sexual_health/girls/bse.html)

## Some TIPS...

Try to come prepared to this visit by knowing the date your last period started.

Do not douche for 3 days before your exam and do not come when 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, like family member or friend.

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's happening.

Know your body so you can tell when anything changes.

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

If you don't want to be contacted at your home with your test results, make sure you tell your provider!

You can call your provider to find out the results of your tests.