



## Well Woman Exam- 21-39

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### **Pregnancy Prevention**

The best way to prevent pregnancy is not to have sex (abstinence). If you are having sex or thinking about becoming sexually active, talk to your health care provider about birth control options. There are many types of birth control.

- Barrier methods: Male or female condom, spermicide, sponge or cervical cap.
- Hormonal Contraception: the pill, patches, vaginal ring or injection
- Implants: IUD (intrauterine device), or the birth control implant
- Permanent sterilization: tubal occlusion for women; vasectomy for men
- Emergency contraception: Plan B, Ella to be used within 3-5 days of unprotected intercourse, Paragard IUD to be inserted within 5 days of unprotected intercourse.

### **Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)**

STI's are diseases that are passed from one person to another through sexual contact. They include chlamydia, gonorrhea, genital herpes, human papillomavirus (HPV), syphilis, Hepatitis B, and HIV. They are spread by contact with skin, genitals, mouth, rectum or body fluids during sexual contact. If you are under 25 years and sexually active, you should have yearly STI testing for chlamydia and gonorrhea.

### **How can I protect myself from getting an STI?**

- Abstinence. The surest way to prevent an STI is not having any vaginal, anal or oral sex.
- Use condoms. Make sure that you and your partner use a condom from start to finish every time you have sex.
- Get immunized. Vaccines are available for HPV and Hepatitis B. The HPV vaccine (GARDASIL 9<sup>®</sup>) is a vaccine that helps protect women against the HPV types that are the most common cause of cancer, precancer, and genital warts. The vaccine is usually given in the arm in 2 to 3 doses. It does NOT prevent all types of female cancers, so you will still need to have routine cervical cancer screens.

### **Pap Smear Screening**

During the pap smear, your provider collects cells from the cervix (opening of the womb). The pap smear screens for abnormal cells on the cervix that can be due to the HPV virus. The HPV virus is passed from person to person during sex. Pap smear screening starts at age 21, and is recommended every 3 years until the age of 30. After age 30, your provider will decide how often to do a pap smear depending on your risk factors.

### **Intimate partner violence**

Intimate partner violence (also called domestic violence) is a pattern of controlling or threatening behavior that a woman experiences from her spouse or intimate partner. If you are in a relationship that is threatening or harmful, please contact one of these resources or talk to your provider.

Emerge – 888-428-0101, [www.emergecenter.org](http://www.emergecenter.org). (The largest domestic abuse shelter and provider of services in Southern Arizona), [www.thehotline.org](http://www.thehotline.org), Safe line: 800-799-SAFE (7233)

### **Nutrition and Fitness**

Good nutrition and regular exercise will help you feel great, have more energy, and improve your health. If you plan to have children, it's a good idea to take a daily multivitamin that has 400-600 micrograms of folic acid. Follow these nutrition/fitness tips:

- Eat a variety of foods including fruits, vegetables, grains, lean proteins, and low fat dairy
- Cut down on fats and sugars, such as candy, sodas, chips, fries and "junk food"



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- Get 30 to 60 minutes of exercise most days of the week
- If you are overweight, work with your doctor to achieve a healthy weight
- Learn more about healthy eating and get a personalized meal plan from the USDA My Plate Plan: <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/MyPlatePlan>

### Helpful Resources for Women

College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists: <https://www.acog.org/Patients>

U.S. Department of Health, Office on Women's Health: <https://womenshealth.gov>