



My First Pelvic Exam

What is a Pelvic Exam?

A pelvic exam is a way for your health care provider to examine your vagina, cervix, uterus, etc. to check for any gynecological problems.

When Should I Have My First Pelvic Exam?

Your health care provider will help decide when your first exam is necessary.

It is typically agreed that this should be done either when you turn 21, or when you have symptoms such as (but not restricted to):

- Unexplained pain in your lower belly
- No menstrual period by age 15 or 3 years after breast development begins
 - Vaginal bleeding that lasts more than 10 days
- Menstrual cramps so painful that you miss work/school

Even if you have never had vaginal intercourse, you may need a pelvic exam if you are having certain problems, such as those listed above. Having a pelvic exam doesn't create any physical changes to your body.

What Should I Do Before the Exam?

It is important to NOT have sex, use vaginal creams, or douche for 24 hours before the exam.

When booking your appointment, feel free to let the scheduler know that this is your first pelvic exam. They will be able to answer your questions and help explain what to expect. This will hopefully ease your worries.

The Exam:

If it will help you feel more comfortable, you can have your mom, sister, friend, etc. stay with you.

You will give your medical history, be weighed, and have your blood pressure checked. You will then be asked to put on a hospital gown. You will need to remove your clothes, including your underwear and your bra.

Your healthcare provider (HCP) will explain the different parts of the exam and will ask you to lay down on the table. You will be given a sheet to put over your stomach and legs.

You will then be asked to move down to the end of the table and place your feet in stirrups, which will hold your feet. With bent knees, you will be asked to let your knees to fall to each side, allowing your legs to spread apart.

It is normal to feel embarrassed, nervous, uncomfortable, etc. during this step. Your HCP will do their best to help you feel at ease. It is important to communicate with them and to tell them how you are feeling.

There are usually three parts to a pelvic exam, although sometimes not all parts are necessary. Feel free to ask your HCP which part(s) will be done for you.

1. The External Exam:

Your HCP will look at the area outside of your vagina. This includes your clitoris, labia, vaginal opening, and anus.

2. The Speculum Exam:

A plastic or metal speculum will be gently inserted into and open your vagina, allowing your HCP to see your vaginal canal and cervix. It is at this point that a PAP test (please refer to our PAP test pamphlet) and/or STI testing may be performed.

1. The Bimanual Exam:

Your HCP will insert one or two gloved fingers into your vagina. With their other hand, they will gently apply pressure to the lower part of your belly. You may feel slight discomfort and/or pressure when they press in certain places, however, it should not hurt. It is important to let your HCP know if you are experiencing any pain.

What Happens When the Exam is Over?

After the exam is completed, your HCP will give you any information that has been found. This includes if your exam is normal, if you need to take any medications, how to get the results from any other tests (PAP, STI, etc.) and when to make your next appointment.

If you have any further questions regarding your first pelvic exam or would like to see a health care provider regarding any sexual health matter, please contact us.

Sexual Health Questions? We Have Answers!

Location:

47 St. Clare Avenue, St. John's, NL, A1C 2J9

Hours:

Monday: 9am – 4:30pm

Tuesday: 9am – 4:30pm
Wednesday: 9am – 4:30pm
Thursday: 12pm – 6:00pm
Friday: 9am – 4:30pm

Phone:

579-1009

Toll Free: 1-877-NO MYTHS
(1-877-666-9847)

Website:

www.plannedparenthoodnlshc.com

Email:

pp.nlshc@gmail.com

Revised: July 2020