

WHAT TO EXPECT: Gynecological Problems

Prepare for Your Appointment

- Do not have intercourse for 24 hours before your appointment
- Do not use vaginal products for 24 hours before appointment

The Appointment

- Appointment length: 20 to 30 minutes depending on the problem
- You may be asked to undress and be given a gown
- A urine sample may be needed

You may need one of the following exams during your appointment:

For Breast Problems:

Breast Exam: Your healthcare provider will examine your breasts to check to see that they look and feel normal. They may also examine the front of your neck to check for thyroid gland abnormalities.

For Problems with the External Genitalia:

External Genital Exam: Your provider looks at your vulva, checking for irritation, redness, sores, swelling or other abnormalities.

For Internal Problems:

Speculum Exam: You'll lie on your back on an exam table with your knees bent and your feet placed on the corners of the table or in supports (stirrups). You'll be asked to slide your body toward the end of the table and let your knees fall open. Your provider may use lubricant to insert a speculum, an instrument shaped like a slender duck bill, into your vagina much like a tampon is inserted. When the speculum is opened inside your vagina, your provider can examine your vagina and cervix (the entrance to your uterus) for abnormalities, including signs of infection, and use a swab to collect any specimens needed for testing. You may feel mild discomfort or pressure during this part of the exam.

STI Testing: Your problem may indicate the need for STI testing or you may request STI testing in addition to having your problem addressed. If the provider is performing a speculum exam, she may collect a specimen with a swab to send out for gonorrhea and chlamydia testing. If you are not having a speculum exam, she may collect a urine sample for testing. A blood sample may be collected for HIV and syphilis testing.

After the Exam

After the exam, the provider will discuss her findings, the labs she will be ordering, and may provide education materials. If labs were performed, results are sent to you through the patient portal. How long it takes for results to come in is dependent on which tests you have had done. Results may take as long as 5 business days. If your results are positive for infection, you may need a follow up appointment for treatment.

Follow Up Appointment for Treatment

- Your vitals (height, weight, temperature, and blood pressure) will be gathered by a nurse
- The nurse will confirm the reason for your appointment
- The medical provider will discuss your results with you and your treatment options
- The SHC can provide treatment of gonorrhea and chlamydia. Treatment of HIV and syphilis will require the involvement of off-campus agencies
- You may be advised to return for retesting after you have completed treatment